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PUBLICATIONS

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KANSAS STATE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EMBRACING

RECOLLECTIONS OF  
EARLY DAYS IN KANSAS

BY  
SHALOR WINCHELL ELDRIDGE

VOLUME II  
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AS A TRIBUTE OF A FATHER'S LOVE TO THREE  
AFFECTIONATE DAUGHTERS,

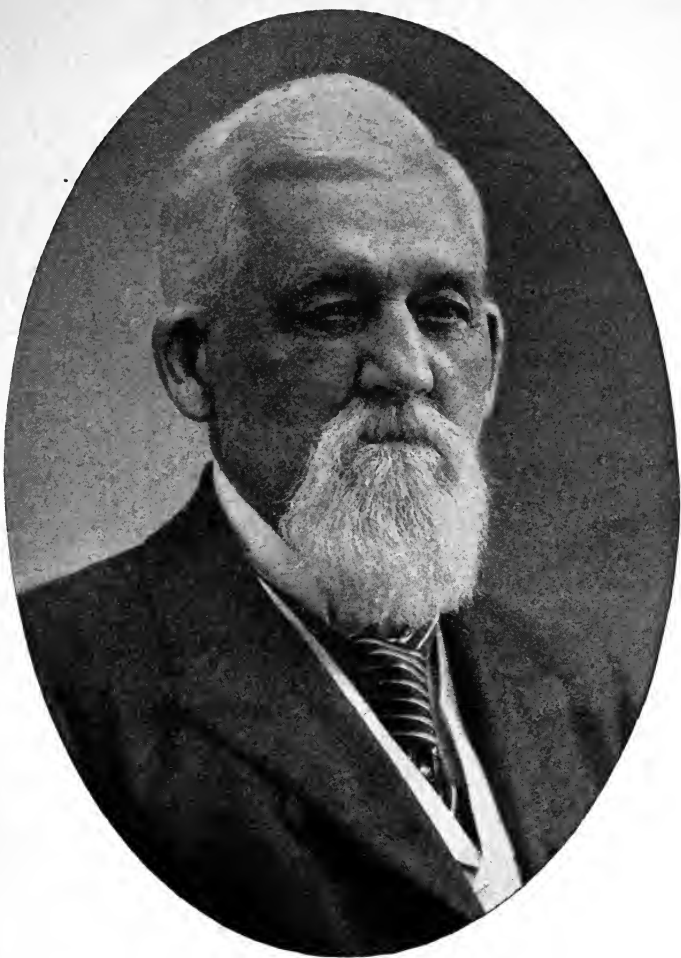
MARY ELDRIDGE LEARNARD, ALICE ELDRIDGE LEARNARD,  
AND EVANGELINE ELDRIDGE MATTHEWS,

WHOSE LOVING ATTENTIONS HAVE BEEN THE JOY OF MY LIFE AND THE COMFORT OF  
AGE, AND TO THE MEMORY OF A COMPANION GONE BEFORE,

MARY B. NORTON ELDRIDGE,

TO WHOSE ABOUNDING VIRTUES AND NOBLE GUIDANCE I OWE THE HIGHEST AIMS OF  
MY LIFE, THESE RECORDS ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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*S. W. Eldridge*



## STATEMENT.

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THE interest which will always attach to the great struggle for freedom in the territorial days of Kansas is ample cause for the publication of this volume. The testimony of an eye-witness is always the best evidence, and Colonel Eldridge not only saw the events he describes, but was an actor in most of them. He was a man of sterling character, deliberate and conservative by nature. It was for these qualities that he was best known to his associates in the great work of making Kansas a free state. And this knowledge was the fundamental cause of the desire of the Kansas pioneers that he write and preserve an account of his part in the conflict here for human liberty. When the business affairs of a life practically spent in Kansas had been to some extent laid aside, Colonel Eldridge found time to comply with the known and often expressed wish of his neighbors.

This work was prepared by Colonel Eldridge in the period of that golden autumn when time for mature reflection on his strenuous and useful career could be given. It was his intention to complete it by publication. But opportunity for this never came. After his death the manuscript was covered under by attention to other matters, and was in a sense lost for a number of years. It came to light during the present year and was brought to the attention of the Kansas State Historical Society. Its merit and value were at once recognized, and the Society arranged with the surviving members of Colonel Eldridge's family to publish it. It is brought out as the second volume of *Publications*, a series designed for precisely this purpose. The Society presents it with every confidence that it will be received with that hearty welcome accorded all its publications. As an authority on the transactions of the pioneer days of this incomparable state it is worthy of such a welcome.

WILLIAM E. CONNELLEY; *Secretary.*

AUGUST 11, 1920.

WORCESTER, MASS., 23 Sept., 1897.

*Col. S. W. Eldridge:*

MY DEAR SIR—I was very glad to receive your kind letter yesterday, and still more pleased to learn that you intend to write your reminiscences of your early Kansas life. The Eldridges were very important factors in securing the freedom of our territories, and it is only just that they, and especially yourself, should be held in grateful remembrance. Especially the story of the movement of the armed emigration from the North, through Iowa, for the relief of Kansas, can be told best by yourself, who had the matter in charge.

Sincerely yours,            ELI THAYER.



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## PREFACE.

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THESE records of personal experience and observation, with sketches of history, were prepared during some months of social intercourse with Colonel Eldridge, two years before his death. Those months were passed in recalling the scenes and incidents and living over again in memory the experiences of our early days. They are, in a degree, a collaboration—or more nearly a correlation—the principal furnishing the subject matter and the penman supplementing it and verifying the parts of the narrative of historical import by comparison with authentic records.

If in the make-up of the work the contributions of the chronicler seem too conspicuous, at times overshadowing those of the narrator, this feature is not an intrusion, but is designed as a proper setting of the story, connecting the events described and bringing into view their relation to the great movement of which they formed a part, and presenting in their true significance matters that unrelated to larger affairs would in themselves be trivial, but which are vital in their relation to great issues.

As the Kansas conflict was the result of a crucial experiment entered upon to harmonize two irreconcilable political forces that threatened the dissolution of the Union, all the features of the conflict, with the minor elements that entered into it, become of deep interest, not only from their dramatic phases, but as a means of determining the value of political forces and the practical operation of the principles of self-government.

The act of Congress, demurring to its own jurisdiction, and transferring to the pioneers of a newly opened territory, while yet in its civic minority, for their decision an issue that for a generation had harrassed and baffled the wisest statesmen, though a daring and dangerous disposition of it, was designed as a finality; and to insure the result it reenacted the judgment of Solomon, dividing in twain the object of the strife. It did result in a finality, but not in the manner anticipated. Instead of a peaceful contest, followed by a lasting truce, as hoped for, it became a passionate and violent conflict, fought with desperation on both sides with armed force and political strategy for the prize of an empire, with a violence that awakened an antagonism throughout the nation. It broke the hold of the slave power and unsettled the very foundations of the government.

But from the throes of dissolution there sprang a reagent that affected the regeneration of the republic, bringing in a new era of political and moral transformation and of boundless development along every avenue of progress.

The subject thus assuming national significance, with most conspicuous features, has been an inviting theme for historical and biographical writing, most of it from a political point of view, much of it controversial and blurred with invidious personalities. Of the minor phases of the conflict little has been written. Owing to the severely practical

character of the pioneers, but scant record of their experiences has been made. To the real actors in the drama the accomplished purpose so grandly achieved was the crowning glory of their ambition, more substantial and satisfying than the tantalizing fantasy of jealous and disputed personal fame.

Kansas was won to freedom by the harmonious coöperation of a multitude obeying no commander, following no leader, but moved by a compelling impulse, guided in their course by the diverse and changing exigencies that beset them, and kept in harmony by the crushing pressure of hostile forces and by the tenacity of a single and absorbing purpose.

Some gained a name above their fellows. There was a galaxy of these of varying magnitude, but of unclouded brightness—Conway, Parrott, Ewing, Lane, Crozier, the Vaughans, Thacher, Ed. Russell, the Wilders, Emery, the Hutchinsons, H. Miles Moore, H. J. Adams, Phillips, Winchell, and others. They lighted the devious pathway through the wilderness to final victory, were but heralds and torch-bearers, not leaders. They gave expression to the public impulse that in the rush of events was surging for utterance. They marked the line of march rather than led it.

Most of the pioneers have gone, leaving few personal records. Much of the minor phases of history is irrecoverable. The real actors in the conflict, thoughtless of personal fame, merged their identity in the mass. Could they now be questioned as to the portion each had contributed to the building of the state, the answer would be, "Look around you." And could they, from their tombs, signify what honor would most satisfy them, it would be the simple carving of their names on the fabric of which they laid the foundation.

It is to supply this lack of the minor phases of history, so far as the observations of one of the prominent actors will go, and to give a glimpse of the way in which the Kansas issue was practically worked out, that this record has been made.

The account of the Quantrill raid by the chronicler has been inserted at the urgent insistence of Colonel Eldridge, as supplying a necessary chapter in his story that would otherwise be lacking, as the event occurred during the absence of himself in the army and of his family in the East. It is not offered as a full history of that tragedy, but only as a description of the scenes that fell under the personal observation of the writer or came within his immediate knowledge.

If the historical narratives are found to differ from the received versions, it is that the views are taken from the inside by direct observation of the living subjects, and a comprehension of events that comes from active participation in them.

This work was not undertaken by either Colonel Eldridge or myself from a desire for publicity, but mainly for an opportunity, in the enforced quiet of age, to live over again events of a turbulent period, which were hard as experience, but most satisfying as a memory; also in response to the request of a large circle of personal friends, but more especially, on his part, as an enduring token of remembrance to three most affectionate daughters.

ROBERT G. ELLIOTT.

# Recollections of Early Days in Kansas

BY COL. SHALOR WINCHELL ELDRIDGE.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### LOOKING WESTWARD.

MY ATTENTION was directed to Kansas by the crusade for freedom preached by Hon. Eli Thayer, who had devoted both his energies and his fortune to rescuing this new territory from slavery, to which it had been thrown open by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. In his zeal to accomplish this purpose and check the further advance of slavery he had visited all the principal towns in the Eastern states and urged his plan of "organized emigration" from the North as the only means of saving Kansas to freedom. Already five companies had been recruited and conducted to the new territory under the auspices of the New England Emigrant Aid Company, which had been organized through his instrumentality. Winter closing the Missouri river, the main line of travel, made further emigration in large companies impracticable.

Having completed the railroad contracts in which for some ten years I had been engaged, I was drawn into this current of emigration, and in company with S. C. Pomeroy and William Lyman I left my home in Southampton, Mass., and arrived at Kansas City on the 3d day of January, 1855. While moved as others were, by the desire to help make Kansas a free state, I felt that I could aid the cause best in the way of business by accommodating and forwarding immigration, and my special purpose was to take charge of a hotel in Kansas City which had been purchased by the Emigrant Aid Company as a part of their establishment. The management and lease of the hotel had been urged upon me by Mr. Pomeroy, and having known him from boyhood, the offer was accepted and I set out with him at once to take over the business.

Alton, Ill., was the extreme western terminus of railroad travel at that time. The traveler, if westward bound, was transferred at this point to a boat for St. Louis; thence he took passage back again and up the Missouri river. There were then no cut-offs or short lines of travel, but little competition to expedite travel, and no consolidation of roads to furnish through trains on fast time. The passenger was dumped off at the end of each separate road to worry over his baggage and be held up by hackmen and hotel keepers, often missing trains and failing to make connections. On the train between Chicago and Alton the official in charge of our baggage proved to be brother Edwin, who afterward joined me and shared the perils of the troublous times in Kansas City.

At St. Louis we took passage on the *Admiral*, one of the better class of vessels plying on the Missouri river. But the low stage of water and the prospect of the boat being frozen fast for the winter compelled us to disembark at a private landing above Jefferson City and continue the journey to Boonville by a farm wagon. From the latter place a stage-coach carried us to our destination. On approaching Kansas City, Pomeroy, who had had experience in the southwest and appreciated the estimation in which a military title is held in the "land of chivalry," turning to me, said:

"Eldridge, if you will address me as 'General' I will reciprocate by calling you 'Colonel.'"

"It is a bargain," said I; and thenceforth our mutual introductions were in accordance with the strictest rules of military etiquette. This reciprocal brevet proved as effectual for both of us as would official commissions, and our military titles, assumed for diversion, have adhered to us through life.

Kansas City we found to be a straggling village of scarcely a thousand inhabitants. Its business houses were contained in two blocks, located on a narrow strip of level ground between the river and the bluff, which rose so abruptly that the third floor of some of the buildings could be reached by a step from the face of the bluff. The streets of the town were yet to be. All work in that direction had been confined to a short levee and to grading an approach to it down a ravine that eventually determined the location of Main street. The road up this ravine wound around by line of easiest ascent till it reached the upper level, the residence part of the town. Here the improvements consisted mainly of one-story wooden houses, so scattering as hardly to indicate the location of streets or interfere with the roadway, which followed the line of most convenient travel, regardless of any survey. Halfway to Westport, which was four miles distant, the road descended and crossed a small stream, by which was located a tavern. Neither the building nor the surroundings had an inviting aspect, and a conspicuous barroom indicated that the entertainment offered was not of the restful kind. Over the door was painted, in rude letters, "O. K. House." The only substantial residence of comfortable proportions and pleasant surroundings noticeable from this main road was that of J. H. McGee, which had been built as a farmhouse before the extension of the town limits.<sup>1</sup> This was the condition of Kansas City in the twenty-fifth year of its existence. It had been located in 1830, but had passed its minority as a river landing for traffic controlled by other towns. Only within a year, since the opening up of Kansas for settlement, had it come into its own estate and done business in its own name.<sup>2</sup> But it entered upon its new

1. The J. H. McGee here mentioned was the son of James H. McGee, one of the earliest settlers to locate on land that has now become part of Kansas City. The elder McGee settled here in 1828, making entry on 320 acres of land at the land office in Franklin on November 14. He died in 1838, leaving a large family. Among his sons those most frequently mentioned in the early annals of Kansas territory were E. Milton, Fry P., and Mobillion W.

2. The beginnings of Kansas City, or "Kansas," as it was first known, date from the spring of 1821, when the Chouteau trading post was established in the river bottom opposite Randolph bluffs. This post was a general agency of the American Fur Company, and while it was a point of trade with the Indians it was in reality a supply depot for the

career with an energy and ambition that gave promise of a commercial greatness that has been abundantly fulfilled. It found itself the main gateway for travel flowing into Kansas, and for an expanding traffic supplying New Mexico, the Indian Nation and all the outposts on the western plains. On the opening of navigation in the spring the steady flow of emigration became a flood, bringing business to the hotel, crowding the tables and the rooms with guests, the corridors with cots, and the floor from parlor to barroom with beds for travelers; filling the conveyances with knights and pilgrims and overflowing the livery stables with business.

That there should be friction and frequent collisions between the diverse elements striving to gain control of the newly opened territory of Kansas was to be expected. But the bitterness and excesses of the strife which resulted grew out of surrounding conditions, not wisely considered by one party, and taken advantage of by leaders of the other. This fact becomes apparent at every stage in the course of events.

The only hotel in the town was the Gillis House, situated on the levee. It had been purchased for the New England Emigrant Aid Company, to be used as a depot for the "organized emigration" which they were directing to Kansas. Being satisfied with the business prospects that appeared so flattering, I accepted a lease of the property from "General" Pomeroy, who was the financial agent of the company. The building was renovated, the name changed to "American House," and reopened to the public with improved service. It was a four-and-a-half-story brick structure surmounted by a large steeple, in which hung a bell to be rung at meal hour.<sup>3</sup> It soon became apparent to me that the greatest hindrance

small interior posts and a point of concentration for traders, trappers and hunters. To this agency, with Francois Chouteau, the founder, came thirty men, all in the employ of the American company as *courriers des bois* and *voyageurs*. And in the fall of the year M. Chouteau brought his own family to the post for a permanent residence.

In 1826 occurred a flood which did much damage to the agency, washing away the buildings. This caused the removal of the post to higher ground further up the river, practically the land now embraced in what is known as Guinnotte's addition to Kansas City. The new establishment was generally known as Chouteau's warehouse, and about it clustered the French settlement which became important as the headquarters of an extensive trade with the Southwest. As this trade increased a better landing place, higher up the river on property belonging to Gabriel Prudhomme, was established. This point laid between what is now the foot of Grand avenue and Delaware street, and its natural advantages helped still further to determine the site of what was to be Kansas City.

Late in the year 1837 a group of men, traders doing business with the little settlement, began to interest themselves in founding a town, and to that end formed a company. After the death of Gabriel Prudhomme his land was sold, and on November 14, 1838, the town company bought it in and proceeded to lay out a town, which they called "Kansas." Difficulties developing, the enterprise was held back for some years, and it was not until 1846 that the company was in a position to give clear title to lots purchased of them. This very naturally retarded the growth of the town. However, as these troubles were adjusted the little village added to its population, but not until 1853 was a municipal government formed. Up to that time a justice of the peace and a constable were the governing officers. On February 22, 1853, a charter was obtained from the Missouri legislature and "the City of Kansas" was fairly established.—Miller, "History of Kansas City," pp. 10-30.

3. The early history of this hotel and its relation to Kansas emigration can be traced through the following:

The pioneer party of antislavery emigrants left Boston, July 17 [1854], and arrived in Kansas City, July 30. . . . Mr. Pomeroy remained in Kansas City and purchased the Union Hotel (now the old Gillis House on the levee), to be used as a rendezvous for immigrants and agency of the society [New England Emigrant Aid Society].—Miller, "History of Kansas City," p. 55. Also Whitney, "History of Kansas City," vol. 1, p. 133.

During the month (September, 1854) the financial agent of the company [New England Emigrant Aid] purchased the "Union Hotel" in Kansas City for the sum of \$10,000 and placed it under the proprietorship of Mr. Morgan, of Massachusetts, to

to the settlement of Kansas was the want of lumber for dwellings. This want bore more severely on northern immigrants, who found on their arrival all the desirable timber lands occupied, or claimed, by settlers from the adjoining state of Missouri, who had the advantage both of nearness and knowledge of the best locations. As winter travel was slack and spring immigration had not yet set in, I felt that I could benefit myself, as well as encourage settlement more, by supplying lumber for dwellings rather than accommodations for travelers. So after a few weeks' experience as landlord I sold my lease and going east invested my means in sawmill machinery. On returning to Kansas City I found that the Emigrant Aid Company had become obnoxious to a turbulent element, and they desired, for prudential reasons, to dispose of the American House. As I had in my brief management of the hotel established myself in the good will of all its patrons, as well as the business men of the town, I felt no hesitancy in purchasing it, paying \$11,000, and giving in exchange my sawmill machinery.

For a season all went well; business was profitable, good will was secured, and pleasant relations established with the varied population of the town. This good feeling was not disturbed till the troubles in Kansas had become so acute as to react on all citizens known to be opposed to the violent methods of the proslavery party. An account of these matters will be related hereafter.

My first trip into Kansas was made in a lumber wagon, with a team purchased for the occasion, and as companions I had J. M. Winchell, the distinguished correspondent of the *New York Times*, and Messrs. Simons and Leadbeater, afterward prominent merchants of St. Louis, Mo.

The road lay through the Shawnee Indian reservation, which reached

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serve as a place of reception for the fast-coming immigrants on their arrival in Kansas.—Andreas, "History of Kansas," p. 314.

Dr. Benoist Troost erected [in 1849] and opened a hotel on the levee between Wyandotte and Delaware streets. . . . It was operated under various names and proprietors, until it finally became historical in connection with the border troubles between Kansas and Missouri. It was known at times as the Western hotel, American hotel and the Gillis House. Dr. Benoist Troost, Gaius Jenkins, H. W. Chiles, and the Eldridge Brothers were its earlier landlords. . . . This hotel was once owned by the New England Emigrant Aid Society, . . . and was the headquarters of the free-state immigrants to Kansas, and was nicknamed the "Free State hotel." When the border troubles were at their worst it was feared the property would be destroyed in some outbreak of the Missourians, and it was leased to H. W. Chiles, a strong proslavery partisan.—Case, "History of Kansas City," pp. 54-55.

The Gillis hotel, known at various times as the "Western," the "American," the "Eldridge" and the "Union" hotel. Dr. Benoist Troost built this hotel in 1849, at the beginning of the California gold fever. The history of this old hotel from 1849 to 1870, to a great extent, was the history of Kansas City. Standing, as it did, facing the levee, between Delaware and Wyandotte streets, the house was the headquarters for river men and strangers arriving in the city during almost the whole period of river navigation. Year after year the halls and galleries of the old Gillis House resounded with the tread of many guests of every age, every nationality and of every degree of life, nearly all of whom have now been gathered to their long rest. In later years the Gillis was made five stories high and presented a picturesque appearance to the passengers upon approaching steamboats.

The Gillis House was well supplied with galleries for the accommodation of the guests in summertime, and bore an air of thrift which made it famous in the West. Here the Santa Fe traders caught a hasty glimpse of civilization while outfitting for their arduous journey across the plains, and here hundreds of gold seekers and hunters rested in preparation for their entrance upon the prospector's life. The overland stage for many years made headquarters at the Gillis House. In the Civil War the Gillis hotel was the scene of many an encounter and dark deed whose history will never be given to the light of day. The escape of Governor Reeder of Kansas from the hotel in the disguise of a laborer is one of the celebrated incidents of the border war.—Whitney, "History of Kansas City," vol. 1, p. 219.



from the Missouri state line at Westport as far west as the town of Franklin, four miles east of Lawrence. The chances for accommodation—and they were only chances, for in the throng of immigration they were often overrun and could furnish only camping privileges—were not many. The first was the Southern Methodist mission. This was used as the executive residence of the governor, and later for the sessions of the bogus legislature, from which issued the infamous slave code. It was a commodious brick building, and from the fact that its proprietor, Rev. Thomas Johnson, was a slaveholder and active sympathizer with the border ruffians, it was the favorite stopping place for proslavery travelers.<sup>4</sup> Further on was a cluster of log buildings, a former Baptist mission, occupied by Dr. Francis Barker.<sup>5</sup>

Some four miles out from Westport was the Quaker mission, a commodious wooden building, in charge of Friends Thayer and Richard Mendenhall.<sup>6</sup> The free-soil tenets of the Quakers attracted to this mission the northern immigrants.

Near the present site of Eudora was another cluster of cabins, the residence of Dr. Andrew Still, that had formerly been a Northern Methodist mission.<sup>7</sup> In the same neighborhood were a number of Indian dwellings of the better class, occupied by Paschal and Charles Fish, King, and other Indians prominent among the Shawnees. All these kept open houses. Interspersed along the road were a number of Indian farms offering but little in the way of accommodation to travelers.

The frontier settler on the reserve was Charles Blue Jacket, who had made his location on the bank of the Wakarusa at the crossing of the California road.<sup>8</sup>

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4. The Methodist mission to the Shawnee Indians was about seven miles from Kansas City and some three miles southwest of the town of Westport. The original survey of Kansas, in the office of the auditor of state, shows the "Methodist mission improvements" as lying on the south side of the road from Westport to Lawrence, on land comprised in what is now the southwest quarter of section 3 and the south half of section 4, township 12, range 25 east, Johnson county. The manual-labor school, built in 1839, stood on the mission land in section 3.

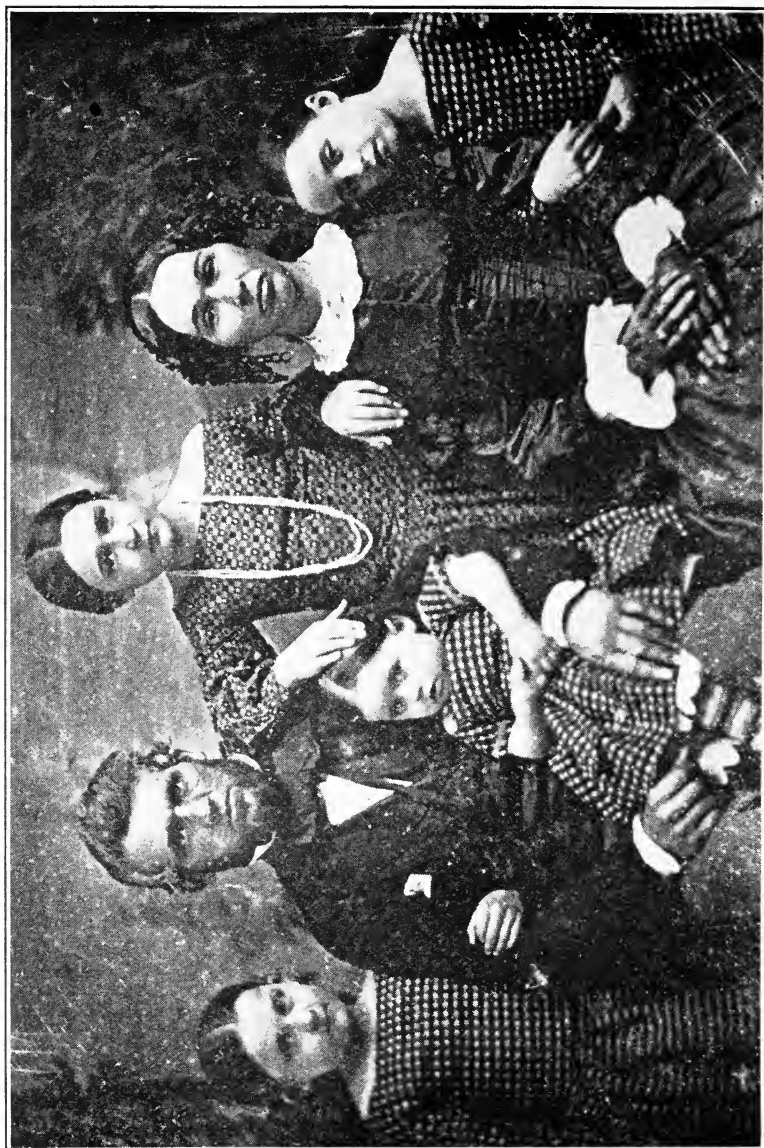
5. The Baptist mission was but a short distance northwest of the Methodist mission and about a quarter of a mile north of the main traveled road between Westport and Lawrence. The buildings have long since been demolished, and all that is left of the mission improvements is the old well on what is now the northeast quarter of section 4, township 12, range 25 east, Johnson county, and about half a mile south of the Wyandotte county line.

6. The Friends' mission, southwest of the Methodist mission and nearly three miles distant, was on the south side of the Lawrence and Westport road. The original survey of Kansas shows the mission improvements to have been on what is now the south half of section 7, township 12, range 25 east, Johnson county.

7. This mission was called the Wakarusa mission and was established about 1848. In 1851 the Rev. Abram Still, with his family, went there to reside. It was located on what is now section 8, township 13, range 21 east, Douglas county.—"Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 9, p. 192, note 47.

Dr. Andrew T. Still was a son of Rev. Abram Still, and in 1853 brought his wife to the Wakarusa mission, where they worked among the Indians.—"Autobiography of A. T. Still," p. 60.

8. A little later the town of Sebastian, Douglas county, sprung up at this crossing. It was situated in the northern part of section 13, township 13, range 20 east.



ELDRIDGE FAMILY, 1854.

## CHAPTER II.

### LAWRENCE.

WE REACHED Lawrence on the 15th of February, and found the town, so widely known throughout the country, a mere collection of shanties, constructed of sods, grass and clapboards, separate or combined, as the skill and ability of the builder permitted; interspersed were some half dozen more substantial rough log cabins. On the bank of the river, at the foot of Pinckney street, stood a two-story weather-beaten, second-hand sawmill, constructed of huge timbers, any one of which would form a load for the teams and roads of that day. Adjoining was a brick and stone smokestack of imposing height, but fitful and phthisicky, with draft depending on the quarter of the wind. In the upper story of the mill, imbedded in a big cottonwood log, was a muley saw that in its efforts to find the line of least resistance cut the boards in varying dimensions. The entire structure had been moved, at great expense of time and money, from Jackson county, Missouri, where doubtless it had served its generation, and surviving its usefulness had been put out of commission. But its former owners, profiting by the lack of sagacity of the Aid company's agent, had unloaded it upon a helpless community for which they held no friendship.

In a line with the mill, with their rear ends toward the river, stood three structures—buildings they could not be called—of nondescript architecture, each about twenty by fifty or sixty feet in dimensions. Two of them were tents with framework of rough poles thatched with long prairie grass.<sup>9</sup> The middle one, occupying the ground where the jail now stands, was of more elaborate construction, a composite of sod wall and hay tent. The ridgepole of the hay-made roof was supported by a row of rough posts planted in the ground and rising through a platform of unplanned boards. The platform was the dining table of the hotel. These were the quarters provided by the agent of the Emigrant Aid Company for the accommodation of immigrants. The two habitations first described were for lodging and public assemblage, with an office for the agent. The composite one was the "Pioneer hotel." Its floor was the well-beaten sod, and its seats

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9. A style of building became quite common, which seems to have been almost peculiar to Lawrence and to that time. It was called "the hay tent." It was built by setting up two rows of poles, then bring the poles together at the top and thatching the sides with prairie hay. The house was all roof and gable. The windows and doors were at the ends. The gables were built up with sod walls. The "Pioneer boarding house" was of this sort. It was fifty feet long and twenty feet wide.—Cordley, "History of Lawrence," p. 13.

The first "hotel" located on the bottom lands, and facetiously called the "Astor House," was opened on the 25th of September [1854] by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis T. Litchfield. It was constructed of poles or staves, the roof thatched with prairie grass and the sides and ends covered with cotton cloth. It was fifty feet long, twenty-five feet wide and about fifteen feet high in the center. Price of board, "for members," \$2.50 per week. The "Astor House" stood on the bank of the river, not far from where the jail is now located. Another hotel similar to this was constructed in preparation for the third party which was to leave Boston on the 26th of September. This was called the "St. Nicholas."—Andreas, "History of Kansas," pp. 313, 314.

were long boards by the platform table, resting on stakes driven into the ground. The service of the table was equally primitive, and the fare harmonized with the surroundings. In one of the hay tents, however, were found more comfortable accommodations for ladies and select guests. At the Pioneer we engaged quarters. A more extended observation of the town showed a rival hotel, advertised as the Lawrence House, of somewhat greater dimensions, constructed in much the same style but of more pretentious appointments than the Pioneer. Sawdust carpeted the earthen floor, the interior was lined with muslin, and a row of two-story curtained bunks paralleled the long dining table.

A third hotel, of much less imposing size and of different construction and equipment, stood on the rear of the lot now occupied by the Lawrence National Bank. Its walls were of sod, surmounted by a canvas roof, in which were attic chambers reached by a ladder. The appointments of the house showed that it was intended more for the entertainment of select guests than of miscellaneous transients. The proprietor of this, the Republican House, as it was advertised, was a retired minister, educated at Andover, whose love of controversy had led him away from orthodoxy and the pulpit. He came to Kansas imbued with the spirit of the crusader, but being an extreme nonresistant, he proposed to rescue Kansas from slavery by argument and martyrdom rather than by political organization and resistance. He had chosen this occupation as affording easier contact with the active men of the territory and a better opportunity for the spread of his influence. But he was unable to obtain martyrdom, though he sought it diligently, giving battle with his tongue to every opponent whom he could engage. A few weeks later he was deprived of a golden opportunity. While denouncing the crowd of armed invaders that had taken possession of the polls in Lawrence, he was drawn under the protection of one of the leaders, and when covered with revolvers was led reluctantly out of danger. The sequence of events in Kansas soon convinced him that one living resistant voter was worth, for general purposes at least, any number of dead, nonresistant martyrs.<sup>10</sup>

10. The man alluded to in this paragraph is Charles Stearns. The following advertisement first appeared in the *Kansas Free State*, Lawrence, on January 3, 1855, and was discontinued with the issue of March 24:

#### REPUBLICAN HOUSE

Corner of Main Street and Avenue B, opposite  
Allen's Store, Lawrence, K. T.

#### TERMS.

Board and lodging.....	\$2.75 per week.
Board, without lodging.....	2.50 "
Board .....	.50 per day.
Single meals .....	.20 "
Lodging .....	.10 "

STEARNS & FITCH, Proprietors.

Lawrence, Jan. 1, 1855.

In the *Kansas Free State*, March 31, 1855, appeared the following advertisement of the

#### ROBINSON HOUSE.

The subscribers would inform the public, that having taken the Republican House into their hands, they are prepared to furnish emigrants with "comfortable shelters," "floored," not "with fresh and clean hay" merely, but with pine boards, "instead of the open air, and naked earth." We will, also, furnish a "single blanket, or buffalo robe," for

A better class of buildings was going up as fast as the one sawmill could furnish the material. But its uncertain output was controlled by one who had a contract from the agent of the Emigrant Aid Company for building a large three-story frame hotel.<sup>11</sup> This last undertaking proved a serious hindrance to building, as well as a loss to the Aid company, though a source of profit to the contractor; for when spring opened a new contract was made, stone was substituted for timber in the hotel building, and the lumber was turned back to the contractor with a handsome bonus paid for the release of the contract. The other improvements in Lawrence at this time consisted of two stores, kept by Paul Brooks and E. Conant; two blacksmith shops; and two printing offices, from which issued three weekly papers.<sup>12</sup> The number of buildings, mostly shanties, completed and begun, as reported by one of the papers, was 117. The population of the town was between 300 and 400, while that of the First district, in which nearly one-half of the present area of Douglas county was included, as returned by the enumerator, C. W. Babcock, in February, 1855, was 962, of whom 369 were voters. Three hundred votes were returned on the poll books of November 29, 1854. The Second district, in which the west half of Douglas county was embraced, was given a population by the same census of 519, making the whole population of the county

covering, and good food at moderate prices. Grateful for past favors, they respectfully solicit a continuance of the same, not promising to hold their tongues about the sins of the Emigrant Aid Company.

## TERMS.

Board and lodging.....	\$3.00 per week.
Board .....	.75 per day.
Single meals .....	.25 "
Lodging .....	.15 "

CHARLES STEARNS.  
GEORGE C. WILLARD.

Lawrence, March 27, 1855.

This ran in the weekly issues of the paper until July 2, 1855.

Mr. Stearns was a correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, and it was while following that line that he met with somewhat rough usage at the hands of the Missourians invading Lawrence at the time of the election of March 30, 1855. Lyman Allen, in his testimony before the congressional committee investigating the troubles in Kansas, says: "About that time Charles Stearns was found on the ground with a book in his hands taking notes. He was surrounded by a company of men, who said they would have no notes taken. They became very much exasperated, and threatened to kill him, but Col. Young [a Missourian] got him out of the crowd without his being injured." The testimony of John Doy before the committee has the following about Stearns: ". . . I was with Mr. Bond and Mr. Stearns when Mr. Bond was driven off the ground and shot at. . . . The same party came back, with an addition, with Colonel Young with them, to where Mr. Stearns and myself were still standing. Stearns was pointed out as an abolitionist, and Colonel Young took him up in his arms and asked them if they intended to injure such a little man as that, as he weighed but 125 pounds, balancing him in his arms at the same time. After some preliminaries, Colonel Young took Mr. Stearns away, off the ground." Stearns was continually at variance with the New England Emigrant Aid Company. He attacked it unceasingly in the newspapers, both in Lawrence and in New York. By its members and supporters he was contemptuously called a "Garrisonian." He was considered quarrelsome and Doctor Robinson once wrote of him in the *Herald of Freedom* that if he could find no one else to quarrel with he would "make a man of straw" so as to be able to indulge in his favorite sport.

11. There had been much delay in getting a sawmill on the ground, but eventually one was set up. "When the mill was fairly in operation—which was about the first of December—the Missourians offered the association \$2,000 for it, which offer was refused, and the mill ran night and day sawing out lumber for the buildings of the city, a contract having been made with the Delaware Indians for lumber. In January, 1855, the mill was leased to S. & F. Kimball, with a proviso that it should run a certain portion of the time in cutting lumber for the new hotel in process of construction."—Andreas, "History of Kansas," p. 314.

12. The *Herald of Freedom* and the *Kansas Free State* each had its own printing office. The *Kansas Tribune* was issued for a time from the office of the *Free State*.

north of the Santa Fe trail, which contained almost all the settlement, about 1,500.

From Lawrence we proceeded westward to Topeka, which we found to be but little more than a name and a magnificent town site. It had been located only about two months, and its ambitious population, even then nursing hopes of the future capital, was comprised in the pioneer party of its midwinter projectors. Only two buildings attracted our attention—a rude frame boarding house near the bank of the river, and a smaller one back on higher ground, occupied by Col. C. K. Holliday. The place as yet not furnishing accommodation for travelers, we proceeded three or four miles up the river and stopped for the night at a dwelling on the Pottawatomie reservation.

The necessity for reliable communication with these rising settlements in the Kansas valley was impressed upon me by this trip. On returning to Kansas City I established a line of hacks, to run as occasion should demand. This line, with the hotel, which now became the point of departure for most of the public travel into the territory, brought me in contact with many of its prominent citizens, as well as into pleasant relations with nearly all the distinguished visitors, for at the time Kansas engaged the attention of the whole country. Most of these men have completed their journey and have entered their final rest. They met difficulties, anxieties and dangers in their labors to make Kansas free. But few of them have names conspicuous in the annals of those eventful years or inscribed on the monument they helped to build. They thought not of fame, but of accomplished results; excavating, laying deep the foundations and laboring upon the inner walls, leaving to others, ambitious for fame, the more attractive work and the places of prominence and honor. In this connection it is pleasant to recall as guests and passengers the names of Branscomb, Blood, Conway, and Deitzler, Parrott, Pomeroy, Doctor Root. O. E. Learnard,<sup>13</sup> C. B. Lines, Judge Schuyler and Robert

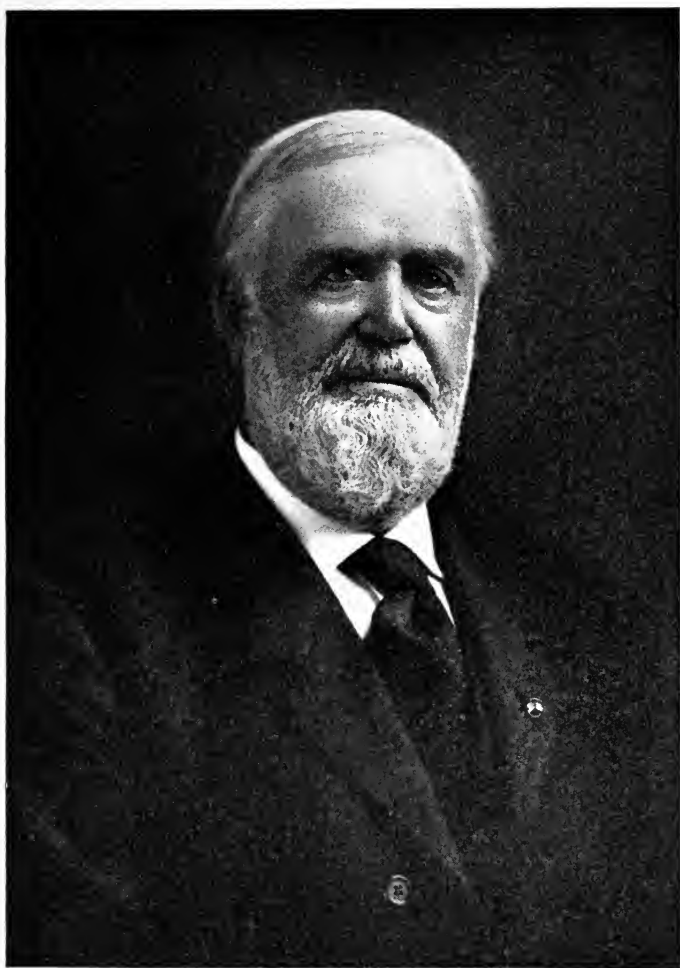
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13. Of those sturdy pioneers who came to found a free commonwealth on the western prairies few did more in that noble cause than did Col. Oscar Eugene Learnard. He was born at Fairfax, Vt., November 14, 1832. He received his education in the Vermont common schools, Bakersfield Academy and Norwich University. He also graduated from the Albany Law School. He began the practice of law at Crestline, Ohio. There he became interested in the struggle for freedom in Kansas and determined to go to the territory and do what he could to make Kansas a free state. He arrived at Lawrence in the winter of 1855-'56. He soon became active in the free-state ranks. He was put in command of a regiment of cavalry in the eventful year of 1856. The campaigns of that year were strenuous and almost continuous. Colonel Learnard rendered valiant service through all this critical year. He successfully executed the movement ordered by General Lane for the final expulsion of the Border Ruffians from the territory. He was frequently complimented by the free-state leaders for his devotion to the cause and for his ability as an officer.

In the winter of 1856-'57 Colonel Learnard made plans for founding a new town in Kansas. In this enterprise he associated himself with other business men at Lawrence. In the spring of 1857 they laid out the town of Burlington, in Coffey county. There Colonel Learnard built the first mill, the first business house. He also erected the first building for church and school purposes.

In the early years of Kansas business and politics were closely associated. In the fall of 1857 Colonel Learnard was elected to the territorial council. He served three sessions in this important body. He was not only an ardent free-state man, but a Republican. He was chairman of the convention at Osawatimie, May 18, 1859, which organized the Republican party in Kansas. Colonel Learnard was elected judge of the Fifth judicial district, which office he resigned to become lieutenant colonel of the First Kansas volunteer infantry in the Civil War. In 1863 he resigned his commission, but in 1864 he again offered his services when Kansas was threatened by the Price raid. He was in all the battles of that campaign which defeated General Price.

For many years Colonel Learnard was associated with the railroad development of the state of Kansas. He was claim agent and tax commissioner for the L. L. & G. Railroad.



*O. E. Leonard*

Morrow. My most notable guests, however, were the congressional committee appointed to investigate the troubles in Kansas, who arrived at the American House April 12, 1856, en route to Lawrence. This committee consisted of Hon. Wm. A. Howard, of Michigan, chairman; Hon. John Sherman, of Ohio, and Hon. Mordecai Oliver, of Missouri, with a corps of clerks, reporters and sergeants-at-arms. The chief clerk was G. G. Fogg, of Concord, N. H., one of the leading newspaper men of New England. It is to this committee the country is indebted for an authentic account of the election frauds and outrages perpetrated in the attempt to force slavery into Kansas. The report fills a volume of more than 1,200 pages, recording the testimony of 395 witnesses, with census list, poll books of all elections, squatter resolutions, and doings of the Emigrant Aid Company, and forms an indispensable document in the study of Kansas history. It was my pleasure to entertain this committee on their arrival in Kansas City and escort them to Lawrence, feeling honored in handling the reins myself.

As southern men are notable for their liberality in patronizing public houses, the management of the hotel brought me into association with most of the prominent men of western Missouri. And as Kansas City was the principal base of operations of the proslavery party, these relations afforded an opportunity for learning the plans and purposes of the leaders. The business also made it easy to transmit information without arousing hostility. The schemes of the border ruffians, however secretly they may have been concocted, were always divulged before they were put into execution. In fact, the typical border ruffian seemed to take his satisfaction in advance, exulting in what he was going to do—the surest way to enjoy it, as his schemes were often reversed. As these hostile designs were boasted of in the barrooms and proclaimed on street corners, their communication to the parties threatened involved no breach of confidence. But to maintain the position I occupied, and be able to use it in aid of the people of Kansas, required both tact and discretion.

A notable instance illustrating this occurred in the fall of 1855, during the siege of Lawrence. A brass howitzer, sent as a gift from the east to the free-state men, had reached Kansas City and lay in the warehouse of J. Riddlebarger, a proslavery man. As arms and ammunition designed for free-state men were, under the border code, contraband of war, the cannon had been closely boxed, marked as "machinery" and consigned to G. W. Hutchinson, a merchant of Lawrence. Before its arrival Lawrence was besieged by an invading force from Missouri, bent on its destruction. An army of 3,000 had been called for by Sheriff

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From this position he went to the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Gulf Railroad, afterward the Kansas City, Springfield & Memphis Railroad, and now a part of the Frisco system. For this railroad he was tax commissioner for thirty years. A great part of that time he had an office in Kansas City, Mo. He was also engaged in the newspaper business, having purchased the *Lawrence Daily Journal* and the *Lawrence Daily Tribune*, which he consolidated under the name of the *Lawrence Journal*. This paper he owned and edited until a short time before his death. President Cleveland appointed him superintendent of the Haskell Institute, the Indian school near Lawrence, which position he held for one year. He was a Unitarian and one of the chief members of the Unitarian Church at Lawrence for many years.

In 1862 Colonel Larnard married Mary S. Eldridge, daughter of Col. Shalor W. Eldridge. Of this marriage six children were born. Of these children two still survive, and Mrs. Larnard is still living. Colonel Larnard died at his home, Lawrence, Kan., November 5, 1911.



Jones to capture the town, and the whole country south of the river was infested with bands moving to join the main force on the Wakarusa. Companies from Clay county, in response to the Kansas sheriff's call for a posse, were crossing the Missouri river, and Kansas City was ablaze with excitement. As it had become known that a consignment of Sharps rifles had run the blockade a short time previously, all loads of goods leaving town were scrutinized, the steamboat landing patrolled, and the American House, opposite, kept under close espionage. In the cannon thus embargoed rested the main hope for the defense of Lawrence with its handful of men, against an army of 1,800 armed with artillery. In this extremity three citizens of the beleaguered town, Captain Bickerton, David Buffum and C. W. Smith, were commissioned for the hazardous undertaking of getting the cannon to Lawrence. There was no direct road on the north bank of the river, all that country being Indian land, but with a wagon they followed indirect routes with which they were acquainted, and crossing the river at the Indian village of Wyandotte, and having eluded the hostile pickets, reached Kansas City after night-fall. It was their purpose to load up the "machinery" and return immediately under cover of the night, thus traveling the most dangerous part of their route before morning. To obtain the "machinery" at such an hour an intermediary was necessary, and, the warehouse adjoining my premises, I was applied to for my good offices with Mr. Riddlesbarger. Such precaution had been deemed necessary for the safety of the party that one of them had carried the order for the "machinery" in his boot, and seeking an interview in a dimly lighted and secluded quarter of the hotel, explained the situation, and pulling off his boot, brought from its concealment an order signed "C. Robinson." As an order so signed was sure to change suspicion to certainty, I destroyed it. Knowing also that the calling out of Mr. Riddlesbarger and the loading up of goods at an unusual hour was likely to lead to discovery and the loss of the cannon, with serious danger to all concerned, I persuaded them to put up the team and wait till morning. Having learned that Mr. Hutchinson had also a consignment of household goods, I stepped into the warehouse the following morning with an improvised order covering goods and "machinery," and avoided scrutiny of signature and suspicion by an offer to pay freight and charges. The box that enclosed the truck of the cannon had been broken so as to expose one of the wheels. This drew out an expression of curiosity as to what kind of "machinery" it might be, but the calculation of the freight bills, which I was just then very urgent to have made out and receipted, diverted further attention. The contraband boxes were first loaded, then the tubs, brooms and other household stuff were placed conspicuously on top of the load. The wagon was moved on, and by intention was left standing conspicuously in front of the hotel to challenge scrutiny, while the team was unhitched and fed and Messrs. Bickerton, Buffum and Smith leisurely ate their breakfast. The steady coolness and unconcern displayed in the whole affair quieted every suspicion so completely that an armed squad of the border ruffians, stationed at the crossing of the river gave the wagon a lift when the team was

stalled in pulling up the bank, and helped send the contraband goods safely on to the besieged town.<sup>14</sup>

The Free State Hotel in Lawrence, afterward made famous by its indictment and destruction before it had been opened to the public, was under construction by the Emigrant Aid Company and designed to be in readiness for the first immigration of the coming spring. Thinking that it would afford a desirable extension of my business, I effected a five years' lease of the property and in the autumn of 1855 went east to purchase the necessary furnishing and equipment for the hotel. Returning in November, I brought my family, consisting of my wife and four daughters, and household goods, with the determination of making Kansas henceforth my permanent home. Accompanying us were two of my former neighbors, Alvin Clapp, who assisted me in business for a time; and one who was destined to become the founder of the school system of Lawrence and prominent in the religious work and business affairs of the town, Charles L. Edwards. Mr. Edwards came out as secretary to General Pomeroy, the financial agent of the Emigrant Aid Company, and made his home in my family, both while in Kansas City and afterward in Lawrence. We were also joined by my brother Thomas, who came to take a partnership with me in business.

While our trip was not eventful, two incidents may be mentioned that occurred to relieve the monotony of a tedious passage over the sand bars and against the swift current of the Missouri river. There was cholera that season in the West, infecting mainly the lines of navigation, and with no quarantine regulations it made travel by river a cause of anxiety. On board the boat on the Missouri was a clerical-looking gentleman who had been stricken and was in the first stage of the malady. He came hurriedly to me in great distress and trepidation, and inferring, as he said, from my manners and appearance that I was a physician, begged a remedy for the cholera. I disclaimed the title of doctor, but had a flask of French brandy which had been presented to me by the proprietors of the hotel in St. Louis where I had stopped with my family. It had been recommended as a corrective of the muddy water of the Missouri, which all boat passengers were compelled to drink. This I proffered him. He declined it, saying under no conditions could he indulge in intoxicating liquors.

"But," said I, "cholera is worse than brandy, and you have got to choose between them. Now which will you take?"

With this view of the case, strengthened by a renewal of the griping that had first alarmed him, he consented to take a small dose and comply with instructions to lie in perfect quietness and call for more on return of symptoms. This he did, and in fifteen minutes felt greatly relieved. This treatment, continued with cumulative doses, brought him through, and before the close of the trip he acknowledged himself perfectly cured.

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14. Capt. Thomas Bickerton's own story of bringing the "brass howitzer" from Kansas City to Lawrence is found in volume 1-2, *Kansas Historical Collections*, p. 216. In the same volume, p. 221, appears an article entitled *The Abbott Howitzer—its History*, which will be found of much interest in this connection. The gun is now in the Museum of the Kansas Historical Society.

At one of the river towns, that I will not name, there came aboard a Missouri colonel who had located in Kansas and who afterward figured conspicuously in the troubles about Leavenworth. He was accompanied by his aged mother, who was an invalid and suffered from the inconveniences of travel. I unpacked a fine sofa from my furniture and had it placed in the ladies' compartment of the cabin for her comfort. Both the invalid and the colonel were profuse in their manifestations of gratitude, and when we parted at Kansas City pledged themselves never to forget the kindness. I regarded the matter as a passing incident, scarcely worthy of mention, but was reminded of it the following spring, when I next recognized the colonel repaying the kindness he had been so profuse in acknowledging by leading a company in the destruction of the Free State hotel at Lawrence, of which the comfortable sofa was part of the costly furnishing. His name was afterward conspicuous in the bloody annals of Kansas.<sup>15</sup> Such perversion of a manly nature is wrought by service in a wicked cause.

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15. The name of the colonel from Missouri is believed by some members of the Eldridge family to have been J. J. Clarkson. Clarkson was commander of the Leavenworth militia in the spring of 1856. He also signed the proslavery circular of June 6, 1856, calling on friends throughout the South for aid, being a member of the committee from Leavenworth county which evidently helped to draft the circular.

## CHAPTER III.

### KANSAS CITY.

ON LANDING in Kansas City and settling my family in the hotel, which for a time was to be their home, another view of the situation presented itself, which had not heretofore received my attention. I had located myself with a view to business and found a bewilderment of opportunities, and with every one a guarantee of success. Every avenue was inviting, and possibilities were limited only by the energy and sagacity of those entering them. There was one great business of the surrounding country—the traffic of the plains. This with its auxiliary employments, overshadowed every other, absorbing the capital, enterprise and activities of the border and leaving all other avenues open, was a temptation to enterprise scarcely to be resisted. But now, as a home for the family, the character of the people and the social features of the community were to be taken into account. As the characteristics of a people are the result of, or largely affected by, the surrounding conditions, a sketch of these will give a conception of the prominent traits of the community.

Kansas City grew up out of conditions that with the coming of railroads have passed completely away, and through a combination of elements which even at that time did not exist elsewhere. It was fortunately located at the junction of streams, on a great navigable river, such as before the days of railroads determined the lines of commerce and the course of emigration. From its situation on the western limit of settlement it was suited to dominate the trade of interior towns and to control the commerce of the Southwest. However, it did not come into existence in its own right as an independent center of business or as a rival of another, but was called into being as an auxiliary to an older town in the handling of a great traffic. Its first stage of existence was as the New or Upper Independence Landing, named from the town that was headquarters of the plains traffic, and it was later known as Westport Landing.<sup>16</sup>

It still held a subordinate place and had not yet reached such a com-

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16. Gregg, in his "Commerce of the Prairies," dates the beginning of the Santa Fe trade from 1822, and certain it was that by 1824 it was well established. Starting at St. Louis as an outfitting point, traders followed the settlements up the Missouri river. Independence was founded in 1827, and for some fifteen years the trade centered there, with landing places on the river at Blue Mills and Wayne City. Westport was established in 1833 and early began to strive for a share of the trade. Its proximity to the landing place at Chouteau's warehouse gave the town an advantage, and with the establishment of the village of Kansas, best known, perhaps, as Westport Landing, and the location of an excellent landing at that point, it held its own in the trade. In 1843 the ports of entry in northern Mexico were closed, and for two years the overland trade languished. Independence and Westport suffered proportionately. The blow to Independence was severe, and she never entirely recovered, for on the resumption of trade in 1845 Westport captured the lion's share. Following 1849 and the emigration to California, Kansas City, the village of Kansas grown larger, began to compete with the two older towns for a part of the trade, and her natural advantage as the best landing place on the river gradually drew the bulk of the traffic, so that by 1854 the town had become the gateway to the west.

manding position in affairs as would make its councils respected and its influence felt throughout its connections. Until the opening up of Kansas it had been more a point for the transfer of goods than a place of residence. With this event it awoke to a new life and strove to assume the precedence that was soon to be accorded to it. This position, however, was not yet attained. Its diverse population was an aggregation rather than a community. Its public sentiment, not yet solidified, yielded to



MARY S. ELDRIDGE  
(Mrs. O. E. Learnard).

whatever influence for the time predominated. In a commercial spirit the town had welcomed free emigration and northern capital. It had joined hands with the New England Emigrant Aid Company, that was expected to pour a flood of population through its portals, that should build up its wastes and enrich it with tribute. Then, under the malign influence of slavery and the pressure of a turbulent outside element, this policy was reversed. Northern settlers were driven out, free immigration embargoed. The Aid company was forced to withdraw its investments,

and settlements in Kansas tributary to the town were raided and their destruction sought.

The prevailing business of the town, the traffic of the plains, had made its impress upon the character of the people. Chief in this line was the Santa Fe trade. From desultory expeditions, undertaken in the early part of the century, and which had met with varied fortune, this trade had become an established industry, with large capital, and employing a small army of men. Army here is an appropriate term, as the organization of a trading expedition was of a military nature, and to the service of the trainman was added the duty of the soldier. The train was a substitute for the old world caravan, adapted to American life and western conditions. The "ship of the desert" was a great wagon drawn by a dozen oxen, the sheik was the wealthy owner, or in his absence his lieutenant, the wagon boss, who, beyond the pale of law, other than that of the plains, gave orders and enforced discipline. The camping grounds over the western border, chosen for the abundant grazing of the herds employed in transportation, were the rendezvous of this army. Here the great wagons were drawn and corralled as they were loaded with merchandise from the warehouses.

When the goods were all loaded, camp supplies laid in, trainsmen enlisted, and promise of sufficient grazing along the route, the trains, under command of their wagon bosses, set out on their long journey of 800 miles over uninhabited plains. Slowly the wheeled caravan followed the trail in its serpentine course on the line of easiest travel, winding along "divides" to avoid difficult crossings of watercourses, crawling up long slopes to higher plateaus, descending to the level bottoms to follow the courses marked out by rivers, and climbing the rugged pass over the Raton mountains, satisfied to gain a hundred miles in a week, and happy if escaping the many dangers that beset the route. That expedition was considered tame that could recount no collision with hostile Indians, stampede and loss of stock, or personal adventure enlivening the monotony of the plainsman's life.

The history of the trade is a story of thrilling adventures, dangers encountered, disasters suffered; and with the first adventurers, of brigandage, starvation and savage treachery. Over the trail hangs a mist of romance. Every point on it has its story, and memorials of adventures are preserved in the names of localities.

The trail was established as a highway for international commerce, by an act of Congress passed in 1824, and marked a pathway for the star of empire, which followed it some twenty-two years later. The bill providing for its location was introduced in the senate by Thomas H. Benton, and was the precursor of those measures for the development of the West, culminating in the Pacific railroad, which that statesman spent part of his life in promoting. The act was signed by President Monroe, but its execution was left to his successor, John Quincy Adams, and was an official sanction of the various attempts previously made to extend commerce in that direction.

The pioneer in the early attempts to trade with Mexico was a French

creole, La Lande,<sup>17</sup> one of the race first to extend outposts of trade and empire throughout the Mississippi valley, to trace its streams, and discover its resources. He was fitted out by a merchant of Kaskaskia, Ill., in 1804, the year following the Louisiana purchase, and set out from that ancient town with a stock of goods on pack mules or ponies, through the unbroken wilderness of the Missouri and over the trackless plains of the West, for Santa Fe, distant more than 1,200 miles.<sup>18</sup> His failure to return and account to his partner discouraged any repetition of the venture from that place. But in the following year James Pursley, of Bardstown, Ky., made the second expedition, with what results does not fully appear, as neither did he return to report, being held by the same spell of enchantment that drew to that ancient city the first Spanish adventurers. In his explorations he found gold in the vicinity of the mountain afterward named Pike's Peak. The knowledge of his discovery was communicated to Captain Pike, who interviewed him in Santa Fe in 1807. His distrust of the Mexicans prevented him from reaping any reward or disclosing the exact locality of his discovery.<sup>19</sup>

The third expedition, or rather exploration, was made in 1806, by Captain Zebulon Pike, under government auspices, sent partly to determine the geography of the new purchase.<sup>20</sup>

In 1812 a company of twelve or fifteen men, under the leadership of Messrs. Knight, Beard and Chambers, with a pack train of merchandise, after a safe journey, had their goods seized and confiscated by the Mexican authorities, and themselves thrown into prison as spies.<sup>21</sup> The arbitrary methods of the governor, and the obstructions interposed against communication with our government from a prison situated in the interior of a continent and surrounded by boundless wastes, prevented the liberation of the prisoners for ten years. However, two of

17. The first known expedition to go out to trade with Santa Fe is mentioned by Stoddard in his "Sketches of Louisiana," 1812, p. 147. The exact date is not given, but it must have been prior to 1763. See, also, Chittenden's "History of the American Fur Trade," 1902, vol. 2, p. 490.

18. For some account of Baptiste La Lande see "Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike," Coues edition, 1895, vol. 2, pp. 500, 602 and 623.

19. Pike refers to this man as James Pursley, as does also Gregg, but Chittenden in his "History of the American Fur Trade," vol. 2, p. 493, note 1, identifies him as the James Purcell who had been "for nineteen years a citizen of New Mexico," and who had contributed a signed article on the Navajo Indians to the *Missouri Intelligencer* of April 10, 1824.

20. It is of interest to note here an expedition to Santa Fe from St. Louis made in 1807 by Jacques Clamorgan. He was associated with Manuel Lisa in the venture and a letter relative to it is published in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, March, 1920, p. 561.

21. In the manuscript collections of the Kansas State Historical Society are to be found letters from J. W. Baird, a grandson of James Baird, one of the leaders of the expedition cited above. Of his grandfather, among other things, Mr. Baird says that he was "a personal friend of Lieut. Zebulon Pike. He was a beaver-trap maker by trade and had a shop in St. Louis on the square of ground between 3 & 4 and Spruce & Plum streets, where the Drummond tobacco works now stand [1898]." Of the expedition he says: "[It] was organized with the following principal persons, viz.: James Baird, Sam'l Chambers, Pa., Robt. McKnight, New Orleans, Dr. Thomas Cook, Pa., Peter Baum, Lexington, Kv., Alfred Allen, Conn., William Minor, New Orleans, Chas. Mier, New Orleans, Michael McDonough, Ireland. Baird, McKnight and Chambers were all originally from Pennsylvania, and I think that Chambers represented an interest in the venture belonging to the McNairs of Penn. . . . James Baird died of quinsy at Taos, Dec., 1896, while on his way home. The family have always been proud of their name and were indignant at Gregg for writing it Beard, as he got the most of his information direct from them.

the number, Beard and Chambers, escaped,<sup>22</sup> and having seen the enormous profits to be got from a successful venture, undaunted by disaster, fitted out another expedition in 1822. But misfortune in a new form befell them. Setting out too late in the season, a northwester overtook them on the Arkansas, sweeping away all their stock. Their only expedient was to cache their goods, travel some 400 miles on foot to Taos, buy pack mules and return for their merchandise.<sup>23</sup> This they did, finding their goods safe, and finishing their expedition with profit.

Capt. William Becknell, in 1821, with four companions, made his way to Santa Fe. He returned that winter, and in the summer of 1822 took out a large expedition. This was a venture of great moment, for not only were the first wagons used, but the route traveled was across the Cimarron desert.

The year 1824 marks the change from desultory adventure to an established trade, with wagons for transportation. In that year a larger expedition than any hitherto was undertaken by Colonel Marmaduke, of Missouri, consisting of eighty men with a wagon train and some \$30,000 worth of goods. When wagons were introduced oxen were soon found to be better adapted to the conditions, and as the trade expanded and spread into other channels, a most profitable market for cattle and feed grew up, enriching the farmers of western Missouri.

The legitimacy of the traffic that had heretofore been regarded with suspicion as of sinister purposes, and subject to the caprices of the Mexican governor, was acknowledged by the exaction of a tax of \$500 per wagon load, without regard to quantity or value. To this is due the immense wagons thereafter built for the trade, and the herds of cattle required to move the ponderous trains. The encouragement of this traffic by the government in locating the trail was followed by measures for its protection, and military escorts were furnished in times of danger from Indians. In this service are found the names of a number of officers who figured in the stormy period of Kansas. Among them, in 1829, are Major Riley, who gave his name to a fort on the Kansas river, and in 1843 Capt. Philip St. George Cooke, who thirteen years later was prominent in the execution of military orders under the territorial governors. The troop of Col. E. V. Sumner is also recorded as doing valuable service in this line in 1852.

From such beginnings, reaching back over half a century, the traffic of the plains had grown to great proportions. On the American occupation of Santa Fe in 1846, and the acquisition of territory from Mexico, it expanded to a magnitude, that, with its auxiliary occupations, furnished a lucrative market for the products and absorbed the activities of the border from Independence to Saint Joseph, enriching the whole adjacent country and making the frontier the wealthiest rural portion of Missouri. While building up the wealth of the country, it was no less

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22. These men did not escape, but were released from prison through a revolution and the consequent change in government.—Chittenden, "History American Fur Trade," vol. 2, p. 497. Also letter from J. W. Baird, Louisville, Ky., Jan. 10, 1898, to Col. Henry Inman.

23. The spot of this cache was thereafter known as The Caches as long as the Santa Fe trail was used.—Gregg, "Commerce of the Prairies," vol. 1, p. 67. Also Chittenden, "History of the American Fur Trade," vol. 2, p. 504.



a factor in molding the character of the population and impressed upon it predominant traits that, called into activity, helped to shape the course of events in Kansas. Combined with the institution of slavery, it produced a condition of society turbulent and un-American, in which were dimly outlined the ranks of baron and retainer, of knight and squire. The first, haughty, intolerant, dictatorial, and regardless of laws conflicting with his own interests; the class of retainers subservient, blustering and unscrupulous; the representatives of the knightly class, aggressive, adventurous and boastful. The army of the plains traffic was not an extraneous element intruded upon the community that might not harmonize with it, but formed a component part, and, commanding the activities of the whole region, wielded a controlling influence in all its affairs. Annually recruiting its forces from the adjacent population, in offering a life of adventure with profits of trade and freedom from social restraint, it had drawn into its ranks the energy and activity of the community as well as the restive spirits of the border and trained them in the habits and excesses of the soldiers' life, but without the restraints of military authority. So attractive seemed to be this service that the young men of the border counties considered their education incomplete until they had spent a season on the plains. On returning to civilization the habits of the plains, easily acquired, were not laid aside. On the contrary, they were often eagerly copied by others. Here we have the elements that brought tragedy into the Kansas conflict—the leaders and the subservient followers trained for violence and organized resistance to freedom—the brain and the muscle of the conflict.

Politics substituted for trade, the plainsman developed into the border ruffian, and in due course graduated with the degree of bushwhacker. From this it will appear that the region of which Kansas City was the center presented conditions such as did not exist elsewhere, and that they were detrimental to the free-state settlers in the adjoining territory. The mobile element of the frontier was first marshaled as voters, then as a posse to enforce the bogus laws. An outgrowth of this state of affairs was the blustering frontier bully—a prominent and numerous character of that time, but more annoying than dangerous if met with boldness; and indeed harmless when not backed by a crowd, but capable of serious mischief in times of excitement.

## CHAPTER IV.

### BORDER-RUFFIAN TURBULENCE.

THE invasion of Kansas and the control of its election in the spring of 1855 was met by the free-state men with repudiation of the authority thus foisted upon them, and the barbarous enactments of the bogus legislature were openly defied. With both parties affairs were moving rapidly towards a crisis. Personal collisions were frequent, with demonstrations of hostility to incoming northern settlers.

The patronage of the American House by prominent free-state men, though the only hotel in Kansas City, caused muttered suspicions of its being the headquarters of the free-state movement, and developed a suppressed hostility that at any untoward incident might change to violence. The necessity for anxious watchfulness for the protection of guests and the business of the house made life there for myself a constant nervous strain, and for my family one of continued anxiety and torment. From well-founded fears of danger, many a night has my wife put the children to bed without undressing them; or she placed their clothes within reach for an emergency and herself watched anxiously for day without disrobing. And often, after a day of excitement and threatening incident, has an entire night been spent by myself and brother Edwin in watching and patrolling the premises for signs of danger to ourselves and property and for the protection of our guests.

A few incidents of almost daily occurrence will illustrate this condition of affairs. One night when about to close the house, one of four men whom I had observed standing in the street in front of the hotel, evidently in consultation, came into the office flourishing a revolver, and calling for a drink ordered it charged to "Atchison," the proslavery leader. Then with a volley of gross profanity and vulgar epithets that marked the border-ruffian bully, he demanded to know "where those — abolitionists were," evidently referring to certain free-state guests whom he thought to be in the house. His insolent bearing, the time of night and the circumstances convinced me that the affair was a plot devised to provoke me and give him an excuse for assassination. I was at that moment unarmed and at his mercy, my revolver being under the desk in a corner of the office. Accepting his abuse as placidly as the conditions compelled me, I walked with an assumed carelessness to the desk to enter the charge for the drink as directed. While making the entry, with my other hand I drew out my revolver. Now there is nothing that so quickly arrests the attention of the bully as the click of a revolver. It is the signal for him to draw his gun. But under cover of the noise of a revolving chair which stood conveniently by, I cocked it, and concealing it behind the counter, with a show of submissiveness on my part, I placed myself directly in front of him. In an instant my revolver was

pressed against his breast, and he was compelled to listen humbly to the echoes of his own vocabulary, returned to him magnified, and ordered forever out of the house. Frightened and trembling, he slunk hastily out and joined his pals. They, after a short consultation, retreated. He at least never troubled me again.

Westport was a separate town, four miles out, located on the Santa Fe trail near the crossing of the state line. It enjoyed the reputation of being a most active town in its hostility to northern emigration. It was the home of Samuel J. Jones, the postmaster who became conspicuous in the troubles in Kansas as the sheriff of Douglas county. As it was the extreme outpost of slavery and commanded an important route of emigration, it assumed the duties of picket guard for that institution, and kept a zealous watch over the affairs of the territory. Its principal hotel, the Harris House, was the rendezvous of the leading spirits of the slave propaganda while supervising the bogus legislature, which met to do their will at the Shawnee mission near by. It was also the boarding place of part of the bogus members, enabling them to retain their Missouri citizenship while legislating for Kansas. It served, too, as headquarters for concocting election frauds and in directing raids into Kansas.

In addition to its floating population, which was large, it was infested in 1856 with an element many degrees more reckless and vicious than the demoralized plainsmen. The "Buford emigration," as it was termed, had been enlisted in the extreme Southern states, under a call from the proslavery leaders for help to drive the abolitionists out of Kansas. They came with no pretense of settlement, but as armed invaders, and were accepted immediately on their arrival as militia for the enforcement of the bogus laws.<sup>24</sup> The nature of the cause in which they had enlisted and the methods proposed appealed effectively to the most lawless and reckless element of the southern communities. Free from the restraints that may have hampered them in their homes, and thrown into the midst of a conflict where brigandage was the authorized execution of law and where the courts recognized no outrage as a crime against free-state men, their criminal instincts were given free rein, making them a terror to northern men, and in the end a scourge to their own party. Filibusters, and not home seekers, they disappeared bodily when their occupation was

24. -Major Jefferson Buford, a lawyer of Eufaula, Ala., raised a body of men to come to Kansas. In his appeal, published November 26, 1855, he said: "I wish to raise three hundred industrious, sober, discreet, reliable men, capable of bearing arms, not prone to use them wickedly or unnecessarily, but willing to protect their sections in every real emergency." These men were recruited from Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina, and by April 4, 1856, some four hundred had enlisted. After exhortations, presentations of Bibles, and religious services, the party left Montgomery, Ala., for Mobile, thence to New Orleans. They made the trip up the Mississippi to St. Louis on two boats, the steamers *America* and *Oceana*, reaching St. Louis April 23. At St. Louis they took the steamer *Keystone* for Kansas City, and from there went to Westport, where they were welcomed with open arms, and where the citizens presented Major Buford with a fine horse, saddle and bridle. That they wore out this welcome is attested by the statement of an old citizen of Westport when he wrote, years afterward: "The people of Westport were glad to see Buford's men come. They were doubly glad when they went away finally." It is undoubtedly true that this expedition did not come to Kansas with the intention of permanent settlement, for very few of them remained in the North or returned here after the Civil War. Upon their arrival in Kansas they were promptly enrolled as territorial militia. They participated in the sacking of Lawrence, and many other outrages were traced to them. Major Buford, early in 1857, returned to Alabama to stay, and died at his home in Clayton, August 28, 1861.—For a brief account of the Buford expedition, see article by Walter L. Fleming in *American Historical Review*, October, 1900.

gone, and in twelve months scarcely a trace of the "Buford emigration" could be found in Kansas. But while they remained they were active and aggressive and made a name that gave its odor to the worst outrages in Kansas. They made Westport a gantlet for immigrants, and the scene of frequent robberies and murders of northern men.

An incident illustrating the eruptive character of Westport is furnished by the experience of brother Edwin. In passing through the town he had stopped at the Harris House to pay his respects to the landlord, fully relying on the characteristic comity of hotel keepers shown the country over. But instead, he was saluted with abuse and threats from a crowd in the office awaiting the dinner bell. An appeal to Harris, who knew him personally, only aggravated his case, as he replied he "would do nothing to protect any Yankee." When the mob was about to have its own way, J. W. Whitfield, the territorial delegate to Congress, coming in, showed one of those redeeming traits of chivalry not uncommon among the roughest men of the border. Recognizing Edwin, and taking in the situation at a glance, he mounted a table, and, drawing his revolver, denounced the attack upon the stranger and proclaimed himself the defender of the "Yankee." Before such an exhibition the mob subsided. The champion took his protege in to dinner, and after treating him with profuse hospitality, accompanied him, for safety, back to Kansas City. Now Whitfield was one of the most virulent of the border leaders, but, like most of them, subject to gleams of nobility even in the blindness of their political infatuation.

## CHAPTER V.

### CONCEALMENT OF GOVERNOR REEDER.

**I**N CONNECTION with our occupancy of the "American House" many thrilling incidents occurred, some of them of sufficient historical interest to be given a place in the various histories of Kansas. Most notable were those connected with the escape of Governor Reeder, a minute account of which will, better than any description, show the true condition of affairs at that time.

While Reeder was in attendance on the congressional committee appointed to investigate the outrages in Kansas, then in session at the Free State hotel in Lawrence, an attempt was made by United States Deputy Marshal Fain to arrest him on the charge of contempt for not obeying the summons of Judge Lecompte's court at Lecompton. Being convinced that all the legal proceedings were solely for the purpose of harrassing him and hindering his conduct of the investigations, and considering himself as a contesting delegate-elect to Congress, exempt from arrest, he declined to submit, and notified the marshal that he would protect himself by all the means within his power, and warned him that he would lay hands on him at his peril. A considerable company that had gathered in the room of the committee to witness the expected collision, among whom were myself, J. M. Winchell, A. D. Searle, R. G. Elliott, Joseph Cracklin and others, expressed approbation of Reeder's determination by cheers. The marshal retired without making any demonstration of force, and with no other molestation than good-natured taunts at his discomfiture from the crowd collected in front of the hotel. But this he construed into resistance by a mob, and, returning to Lecompton, proceeded to summon a posse to make a more impressive demonstration and overawe the committee. Reeder, perceiving that his personal connection with the investigation would only hinder the committee and jeopardize its results, and acting on the advice of friends and members of the committee, secretly left the territory in order to avoid arrest. After a few days' concealment in Lawrence and indecision as to his route in attempting to escape, accompanied by George F. Earle and Gaius Jenkins, he appeared at the American House at four o'clock in the morning of May 14, 1856, having made the trip from Lawrence under cover of the night.

The proceedings against Reeder, while directed for the purpose of harrassing him and crippling the congressional investigation, had an additional and deeper motive. His resistance to arrest was anticipated, and indeed sought, as an excuse for marshaling a posse to accomplish under Federal authority what had failed to be done in the previous winter under bogus officials—the destruction of Lawrence. Reeder stood as the personification of the free-state issue, and as the author and advocate of the policy of resistance to the bogus laws. Those defiant resolutions that

stand out so boldly in the proceedings of the Big Springs convention, adopted with such determination the previous fall, denouncing the usurping territorial authorities, refusing submission to the bogus laws, proclaiming resistance to a bloody issue as soon as it shall appear that peaceable remedies fail and forcible resistance shall furnish any reasonable prospect of success, and recommending the organization and discipline of volunteer companies and the procurement and preparation of arms, were of his drafting and were impressed upon the convention in one of his most notable addresses. His election by the Free-state party as delegate to Congress, his choice as United States senator under the Topeka constitution, his prominence in national politics, and his conflict, in behalf of the people, with the Federal administration, placed him in the position, at that period, of their unquestioned representative, and with his commanding abilities qualified him as the most powerful advocate of the cause of Kansas both in Congress and before the public. While personally, as a prisoner, he would have been a prize, the manner of his arrest was designed to provoke resistance and open the way for the employment and support of the bands of allies who had been called to the aid of the slave party. The ostentatious service of the writ on an occasion that invited resistance and expressed disrespect for the congressional committee made it apparent that the marshal was acting his part in a prearranged plot, and that he was playing for more than the simple arrest of Reeder. Subsequent events proved this, and Reeder's escape left the marshal and his gathered hordes without an excuse, even to themselves, for the vandalism that followed on the 21st of May.

The disappearance of Reeder left his enemies in doubt as to his whereabouts. But as no word had come from him, it was generally believed, till after the destruction of the Free State hotel, that he was concealed in Lawrence. Diligent watch was kept on all lines of travel, steamboats were inspected, and it soon became apparent that the American House was under espionage. As he was widely known in Kansas City, his successful concealment in a crowded hotel in the midst of a hostile and treacherous community, with the danger of search and discovery, called forth every device and strategy that the whole family could command. That a closed room might not attract attention, it was necessary often to change his place of concealment. Being a man of notable appearance, whom anyone would readily recognize, this could be most safely done while the guests were at dinner. On one occasion it became necessary, on account of some suspicious incidents, to remove him to an upper floor. Having seen the guests seated at the dinner table, I hastened to Reeder's room, and finding him attired, by my direction, in the garb of a porter, called him to follow me. Passing hastily down the corridor we ran up against Secretary Woodson, just then acting governor of Kansas, standing at the foot of the stairs engaged in earnest conversation with a proslavery friend. Both were well acquainted with Reeder, Woodson having served as secretary under him. To say that both the ex-governor and myself were struck with paleness and trembling is but to express our condition faintly. From the earnestness of the conversation between the two it was evident that Woodson was wrestling with the

newly acquired duties of his office of acting governor and director general of the forces for the suppression of the Free-state party in Kansas. Perceiving them so deeply absorbed that they did not discover in the two intruders other than landlord and porter, we took courage to ascend the stairs, at the head of which the porter was directed to his duties, and I left him to avoid the suspicion of intimacy with a too distinguished-looking porter.



EDWIN S. ELDRIDGE.

During Reeder's concealment there were others in hiding in the hotel, the danger of discovery increasing with the number. Among them were Gaius Jenkins, A. D. Searle, and G. P. Lowrey, the private secretary of Governor Reeder. George W. Brown, the editor of the *Herald of Freedom* of Lawrence, had also landed from the boat at night on his return from the East, to find himself bottled up in the hotel with no chance to leave it safely, and but little more to remain, as his coming was known. Upon his arrival I informed him of the changed condition of affairs that had taken place in his absence, and asked him, "Why do you come here at this dangerous juncture, when your presence is certain to bring us all into trouble? Don't you know that you will be arrested before morn-

ing?" Not yet having met the border ruffian when rampant, he assured me he had no fears, and showed me his arsenal of Allen's pepper-box revolvers, dangerous mainly to the man who carried them, but in which he put his trust.

The following morning when returning from the steamboat landing my attention was attracted by the yelling and commotion of a mob that was running together and shouting "Hang him," "Shoot him," and with loud curses was clamoring for blood as they dragged the victim, paralyzed with fright, along the street, regardless of his entreaties. The man proved to be O. C. Brown, a business man of Osawatomie, in no way connected with political affairs, whom they had seized in his room in the hotel and dragged downstairs with the design of lynching him. He was recognized, however, by a number of the business men on the street, who vouched for him. The mob released him when they found he was not the Brown they wanted. By this I knew that there was a determination to take Editor Brown. Hastily returning toward the hotel, I called at the store of Frank Conant and asked the loan of his arms. He gave me what he had, an old horse pistol, loaded, by my request, with a full charge of buckshot. It was a clumsy, old-fashioned thing, but it acted its part well. Thrusting it inside my vest and proceeding to the hotel, I conferred with brother Edwin as to whether we should quietly submit to the demands of the mob or make a stand in defense of our house and guests. His answer was, "Defend our rights." Going up to Reeder's room I explained the condition of affairs and apprised him of the danger that threatened and our purpose to defend our guests. He had seen the commotion from his window and realized what it meant. Throwing off his coat and vest, taking his revolver in one hand and a knife in the other, he said, "Tell your brother that if they overpower you to retreat up the ladies' stairs"—near the landing of which was his room—"and I will do my best."

Returning to the office, Edwin and I took our position near the outer door in readiness for the expected intrusion. We had not long to wait till Capt. H. Clay Pate, leaving the mob in the street, entered with ten chosen men and started towards the stairs. At this juncture old blunderbus came suddenly into position, reinforcing a command to halt and a notification that the first one who stepped upon the stairs would be a dead man. The command was promptly obeyed. Pate consented to a conference, in which he was reminded of the hospitable treatment he himself had received, and of the obligation of a landlord to defend his house from intrusion and his guests from annoyance. He was informed that with a legal process he would be permitted to go through the house, but anyone who attempted to go up the stairs without it would be killed. With further intimation that there was other force in reserve, which meant a bloody task for whoever attempted it, he withdrew from the premises and sought game elsewhere.

Ten days afterward, with a company of thirty men, he made an incursion into Kansas to drive out free-state settlers. But he and his party were gobbled up by a much smaller number of men under Old John



Brown, and obtained their release only by the interposition of a Federal officer.

Brown and Jenkins remained in concealment some three or four days longer, as, owing to the increasing excitement, and the gathering of the border-ruffian clans for the assault upon Lawrence, with their vigilant watchfulness for defenceless free-state men whom it would be safe to attack, any attempt by them to return to Lawrence would lead to certain capture. At length, when there seemed to be quiet in the turbulent element, and a reasonable chance of escape, I procured a good horse and saddle for Brown—Jenkins had a horse of his own—and providing them with a lunch, after careful reconnoissance, I started them, under cover of the night, on their way to Lawrence. A pathway over the bluffs extended down into an obscure road that led through the Kaw bottom to the village of Shawnee. This route I advised them to take, as by it they would avoid Westport, the most dangerous locality on the road. This advice, it afterward appeared, was not taken, as in passing the place of Milt McGee, on the road to Westport, they were both captured, and by way of contempt placed under the guard of one of his slaves. The presumption is that Brown in rejecting my advice as to his route placed undue reliance on his sagacity, bravery and portable arsenal. Both Brown and Jenkins were sent as prisoners to Lecompton, where they were confined four months with Robinson, Smith and Deitzler, on charge of treason. My horse and saddle procured for Brown were confiscated, as to claim them would only commit myself. For their loss, and the perilous service rendered and sacrifices made, I have received to this day neither compensation nor acknowledgment.

While occupying the American House, especially during the period that Governor Reeder and others were in concealment, it became my regular task to keep watch during the night, putting out the lights and spying from all the windows available, to guard against surprise. The necessity of such vigilance will appear from the following incident. At one time a mob, it was learned, had determined to search the house. Any attempt to prevent it would only confirm suspicions and lead to certain discovery and aggravate consequences. While parleying with the mob, I visited Reeder in his room and urged upon him the absolute necessity of some other mode of concealment. He fully realized it, but it was with great mortification that he yielded to the only plan offering any chance of success. He was stowed away under a bed in the room occupied by brother J. M. Eldridge and family. Trunks and bed clothing were arranged so as to avoid suspicious appearance, and to fill up the room a sewing circle was improvised, consisting of Mrs. Augusta and Mrs. Edwin S. Eldridge, Mrs. Wilcox and a number of the help. The door was left open, and the searching party, seeing the ladies attentively at work, were completely thrown off the scent, and with a hasty glance into the room passed on and gave up the search.

It was about this time that the governor, fully realizing the danger to his life and the uncertainty of escape, placed on record his opinion of his adversaries, and like the martyrs of the Scottish covenant, left his testimony against them to his survivors. On the 22d of May he made

his will: "I, Andrew H. Reeder, being in danger of being murdered by a set of vile ruffians and outlaws, who are outside of all the restraints of law, order, decency and all social obligations, and who are below the savage in all the virtues of civilization, . . . in view of my death, which may happen to-day or to-morrow, make this last will and testament: . . . " <sup>25</sup>

Governor Reeder was of muscular physique, martial bearing and commanding presence. He was firm of purpose, bold in assertion and vigorous in action. He was clear in his conceptions, conscientious in his opinions, exact in his judgments, and with a just pride of position, honest, pure, and temperate, he possessed all the attributes of exalted manhood. But the bitterness of a year's conflict with the most unscrupulous of the emissaries of slavery, for which he was proscribed by the party to which he had given his life's service and disowned by the administration that appointed him, left him defenseless, exposed to the revengeful instincts of the border ruffian and plots against his life. Beset with these harassments, his natural caution was changed into a morbid apprehension of personal danger that deprived him of the prestige which a bold and aggressive attitude would have given him.

That he was unduly suspicious of plots against his life and subject to alarm will appear from an incident that occurred while he was yet governor and hedged by the dignity of his office, and before the vindictive feeling toward him had arisen. The bogus legislature was in session at the Shawnee mission, near Westport. Rev. Thomas Johnson, superintendent of the mission, was a proslavery man and a member of the council, and many of the legislators boarded with him. While the mission was also the executive residence, the governor, for prudential reasons, during the session spent the nights at the American House in Kansas City. General Stringfellow had previously made a personal attack upon him in his office, and the friction between the governor and the legislature was increasing. Reeder was alone among this crowd, as the one free-state member allowed a seat in the legislature had repudiated it by resigning.<sup>26</sup> The governor was in constant fear of assault, though the treatment accorded him had been rather ignoring contempt than threatened violence, and one morning asked Colonel Coates and myself to accompany him to the mission. In preparation for an emergency we went well armed. The forenoon passed with only a display of studied reserve in his presence. When dinner was called the governor took the head of the long table and Coates and myself a seat on each side of him, while the Rev. Mr. Johnson occupied the further end. Reeder, while adjusting himself in his seat, loosened his revolvers and brought them to the front, concealed by the tablecloth. Observing this, Coates and I did likewise. When the table was filled by the guests, who gave us only the recognition of a vacant stare, his reverence raised a huge carving knife and brought it down with such force as to startle us. When we had recovered our nerves it was seen that the startling rap was not a signal for assassins but a call of attention while he invoked the divine blessing.

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25. For copy of the will of Gov. A. H. Reeder see "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 3, p. 223.

26. Samuel Dexter Houston, who resigned July 23, 1855.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ESCAPE OF GOVERNOR REEDER.

THE arrival of companies of "Buford men" and the gathering of the bands to the call of Sheriff Jones for the invasion of Kansas added to the turbulent element in Kansas City and greatly increased the danger of Reeder's discovery as well as the difficulty of his escape. In the midst of this I was called to Lawrence to look after our interests that were threatened there, and left the affairs in Kansas City, with the responsibility of guarding those in concealment, with brother Edwin. How faithfully and skillfully he managed will appear from the account of Reeder's escape. The turbulence that had been constantly increasing was intensified by the return of the bands from the sacking of Lawrence on the 21st of May, and required only an occasion that might arise at any moment to break into mob violence. It became necessary at once to devise some means for Reeder's escape instead of waiting longer for an opportunity. Only one boat, the *J. M. Converse*, that plied the Missouri could be depended upon, being owned in Pittsburgh, and its captain known to be friendly to free-state men. But its service had to be waited for. Mr. Coates arranged with the captain to take Mr. Reeder on board in disguise on the down-river trip, at a point agreed upon, some six miles below Kansas City. A man was employed to meet Governor Reeder at a secluded point on the bank and carry him in a skiff to the designated place. How the matter was accomplished is best told by brother Edwin himself, in a letter recently written. He says:

"The facts are these: I fed, or caused to be fed, Governor Reeder during his imprisonment at the hotel. I was in close consultation with him daily. I bought his suit of clothes, axe, pipe and tobacco, at past midnight preceding the night he escaped, of Frank Conant. When I spoke to Conant about the suit in the daytime he turned pale as death and would not discuss it, but I insisted, so midnight was set. He took down a wooden blind and let me in at the window. He could not have talked if he had tried, and I had to do the work and find what I wanted myself. I think he was never happier than when I left. I took the things to Reeder after climbing the steep, muddy hill back of the hotel, entering the second story. The pants were too small and had to be hastily altered by your wife, Lambert, and Mrs. Wilcox. I furnished tools for him to shave off his mustache and whiskers. On the following night he was to leave the hotel at a signal agreed upon. A large meeting was being held by southerners in front of the hotel, and while a Mr. Pennebacker, of Virginia, was raking the northern abolitionists and firing the southern heart generally, the signal was given. Reeder came out of his room and downstairs, making a good deal of noise. He was smoking, and his axe was over his shoulder. He took a seat in the crowd on the steps, I standing beside him. In about ten minutes he left, walking slowly down the levee. I then went to my room for my wife. We took Reeder's valise, which was a large one and very heavy. We went up a gully, which is now Delaware street, to Fourth or Fifth street, thence over to Walnut or Grand avenue

and down to the river bottom. We carried this valise between us, and on meeting people, which we did a few, my wife's dress was pulled in front of the baggage until they passed, and then quickly spread behind the valise. A long way down, or what seemed to be a mile or so, was a place fully agreed upon by the man who had the skiff, and fully described by me to Reeder. After a good deal of skirmishing about we found Reeder, who seemed to be awfully afraid of betrayal or mistake. This I judged from his actions when my wife and I arrived. He did not reply to the signal given twice or three times. Once when we went stumbling up a dark ravine he arose suddenly, with his axe drawn or lifted in a menacing attitude. After a few minutes' rest and conversation I started out for the man with the skiff. After much walking, once falling down, and many signals, each of us being afraid of some trap or trick, we met. Then the man went with me to Reeder. Then all went to the river and bid the governor farewell. All this is as vivid to me as if it occurred last night. This covers what I did. Colonel Coates negotiated for the steamer *Converse* to take him down from Randolph landing. He also arranged for the skiff."<sup>27</sup>

For his trouble and the risk incurred, the captain<sup>28</sup> of the boat was paid handsomely and the owner of the skiff liberally rewarded. At Randolph landing the governor got aboard, with axe and pipe, in his guise of a woodchopper, and took a bunk with the deck passengers. But perceiving that many of them were southerners returning from the sacking of Lawrence, some of whom he knew, and whom he perceived watching him suspiciously, he left the boat below St. Charles, late at night during a storm, and with a heavy valise, and a heavier load of anxiety, in company with O. A. Bassett and George C. Brackett, he traveled on foot twelve miles across to the Mississippi and was ferried over to the Illinois shore. The minute particulars of this affair will be found in a volume of "Kansas Historical Collections," as recorded by the governor in his diary.

G. P. Lowrey, the governor's private secretary, had previously escaped, also in disguise, down the river, without other incident than seeking concealment under the bed of a proslavery brother Mason, on the occasion of Captain Pate's attempt to search the hotel.

Later A. D. Searle arrived at the hotel, having to leave Kansas on account of his prominence as a member of the "Lawrence Stubbs," a company that had been armed with the first consignment of Sharps rifles. He was accompanied by Charles L. Edwards, who was also obnoxious to the proslavery men as being secretary to General Pomeroy. After remaining in concealment till the 7th of June, Mr. Searle escaped on a boat down the Missouri. His trials are told by himself. He writes:<sup>29</sup>

"On June 5 the mob searched every room in the hotel for free-state men. They captured M. F. Conway and ordered him to leave the country, and he and F. A. Hunt took the steamer *Morning Star* for St. Louis. The mob claimed to be searching for John Hutchinson and J. S. Emery (who were not there) for the shooting of Sheriff Jones, and myself for shooting a Mr. Cox at Lawrence. I escaped by being in my sister's room, secreted

27. This letter was undoubtedly written many years after the occurrence described, hence discrepancies which appear when it is compared with the diary of Governor Reeder. This diary may be found in "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 3, p. 205, and is followed by a statement of George C. Brackett, telling of the trip down the river and the escape from the boat.

28. Capt. G. W. Bowman.

29. This extract is from a paper by Mr. Searle, read before the James A. Garfield Post, G. A. R., Leadville, Colo., and later, under the title "Border Life in Kansas," published in the *Herald Democrat*, Leadville, April 15 to May 6, 1894.

between the mattresses of her bed, she lying on the outside feigning sickness when they examined the rooms.<sup>30</sup> To save the hotel from destruction Eldridge had bargained to sell it to proslavery parties, and expected every day to give up possession.

"It was getting to be very uncomfortable quarters for me, and on June 6 I left there with Martin Gaylord, intending to return to Lawrence, forty miles distant, on foot, by traveling in the woods on the south side of the Kansas river, but it was four months and nine days before I reached my destination. We got lost and came out to the edge of the prairie, near the Quaker mission, about ten miles from Kansas City, and attempted to cross the California road and reach the mission. The first thing we knew we were met by a gang of fifteen or twenty border ruffians and captured, almost on the very spot where I had spent the first night I camped on Kansas soil, September 10, 1854.



C. L. EDWARDS.

"In the confusion caused by our capture, the following is in substance the language addressed to us: 'Where do you live? Where are you from? What are your politics? How much money did that d—d Emigrant Aid Company give you to come out here? What the h——l did you come here for? Did you come to make Kansas a free state? Why didn't you go to Nebraska? That's a good country, and you d—d Yankees may have it, but Kansas you'll have to fight for.' After other profanity they called out: 'The rope, boys; the rope! Let's hang the G——d d——n Yankees.' During the last few days hanging free-state men had been common amusement for these gangs of ruffians along the border, who were portions of the governor's posse that sacked Lawrence on May 21.

"Arrangements were being made for hanging us, and I expected to be hung as much as I ever expected anything, but on searching me preparatory to hanging they found a quart bottle of good whisky in my coat

30. Mrs. Almira Searle Eldridge, the wife of Edwin Eldridge.

pocket. This turned their attention from the hanging business and they searched me no further, and failed to find in my inside pocket some documents I was conveying to free-state parties in Lawrence, which, if they had discovered, would have insured my being hung then and there. I claimed that I procured the whisky at the Harris House in Westport, which was one of the headquarters for border ruffians.

"I asked them to take a drink, which they did, after insisting that I should drink first, which under the existing circumstances I was very willing to do. Quite a conversation followed and I mentioned some incidents that had occurred at Milt McGee's, another border-ruffian headquarters near Kansas City, a few nights before. I had heard about it in Kansas City. One of the men, who seemed to be a leader and quite an intelligent looking fellow, and one who had been eyeing me very closely, at once claimed to recognize me as having seen me at McGee's on that occasion, and I did not try to convince him to the contrary. He said he believed I was a *gentleman*, as none but gentlemen could have been at McGee's that night, and that my whisky was good and I should not be hung. After much parleying it was decided to send us under guard to their camp, and three of the youngest of the gang were detailed to escort us to camp, and the rest of them proceeded on their way to Westport.

"On our way to camp I became very uneasy about the documents I had in my pocket, and I asked permission of the guard to step to one side for a moment, which was granted. I got behind an oak tree near by and removed the papers from my pocket and covered them over with leaves and sticks at the foot of the tree, and again joined the guard and went on to their camp, which was composed of South Carolinians in command of Captain Moon, to whom we were presented. There being a drink of whisky left in my bottle, I gave it to him.

"The guard reported the details of our capture. As soon as it was noised about camp there was great excitement, and the men crowded around us and expressed themselves in no mild terms as desiring to feast off our hearts and drink of our blood for their breakfast, etc., and a second edition of the scene of our first capture was enacted. Captain Moon finally succeeded in quieting them by promising to keep us until morning. He questioned us very severely and I told him several lies. It was quite dark and getting late when he left us alone in a small tent, and all became quiet about the camp.

"Toward midnight he came to us and in a whisper called us out of the tent and told us to quietly follow him. He said he had decided to let us go; that he could not control his men, and if we remained there until morning he would not be responsible for our lives. He escorted us back on the same road we came (and the same road I passed over in a buggy with Edwards twelve days before), passing his picket guards, and about half a mile to a byroad in the woods, which he said would lead us to a point on Turkey creek near Kansas City, and for us to leave the country and not return. He shook hands, and, bidding us good night, told us to 'get'—and we 'got.'

"Gaylord, who was religiously inclined and a true and good young man, objected to my profanity, even in this trying ordeal, and said our escape was very "providential." I did not think Providence had anything to do with the matter, and claimed that our escape was due to the whisky, a little lying, some profanity and our good luck. I found the tree where I had hid my papers, which was near by, and I recovered them. Before daylight on the morning of the 7th we were back in Kansas City, nearer dead than alive.

"Eldridge had closed the sale of the hotel and was soon to give possession, and I could no longer remain there; so, by the assistance of Eldridge, Colonel Coates and Doctor Lykins, I was furnished a stateroom and quietly got on board the steamer *J. M. Converse*, then lying at the levee, on its next trip down the river after Reeder's escape."

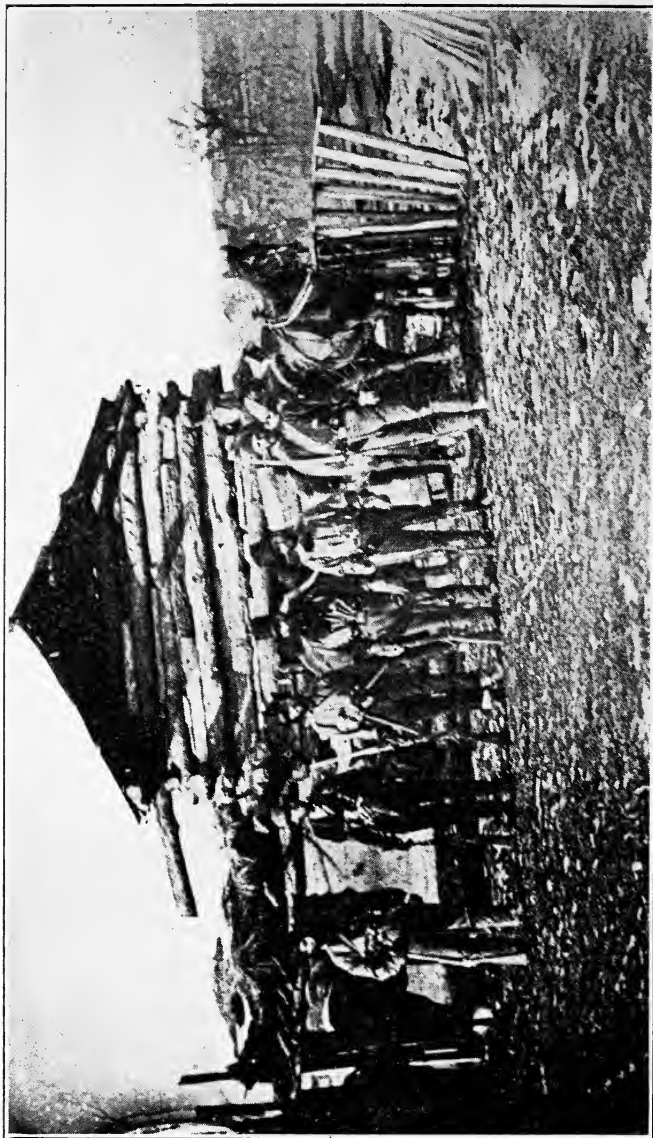
## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SACKING OF LAWRENCE.

AS HAS BEEN seen, my family remained at the American House in Kansas City during the winter of 1855-'56. After leasing the Free State hotel in Lawrence it had been arranged between my brother, Thomas B. Eldridge, and myself that I was to continue the management of the American House, while T. B. was to take charge of the hotel in Lawrence. It was finished in April, and we had chartered a steamer at Kansas City to transfer to Lawrence the furniture which had been purchased in Boston and St. Louis. The society of Lawrence was much more congenial to my family than the border-ruffian circle in Kansas City, so I was exceedingly anxious to get them settled in the new hotel. About the first week in May I moved them over to Lawrence. The hotel was not quite ready for general occupancy and there was no one there but my brother, General Pomeroy, and Messrs. Edwards and Simpson.

Affairs were fast reaching a climax, and by the middle of May, as one day we were driving to Lawrence, we found the whole country in a turmoil, overrun by armed bands from the neighboring counties in Missouri that had responded to the call of the marshal for the assault on Lawrence. They had possession of the country from the Wakarusa to Lecompton, and were led by Atchison, Stringfellow, Burns and other border leaders, reinforced by the Buford men, under Buford, from Alabama; Zaddock Jackson, from Georgia; and Col. Warren D. Wilkes, from South Carolina.

At the Blue Jacket crossing we overtook a wagon loaded with arms designed for the people of Lawrence. On reaching Franklin, then a town of some twenty or thirty buildings, we found it in possession of a military force, who halted us and took us prisoners. At headquarters, to which by request we were taken, I found myself in the presence of Sheriff Jones, who proved to be in command of the camp and who was waiting for reinforcements to fill up his posse before moving upon Lawrence. Some three weeks previously Jones had been shot in Lawrence, where he had gone with a squad of United States soldiers to make arrests of citizens for whom he had writs. He was fired upon after night in the tent of Lieutenant McIntosh, by some one without, and wounded in the back. For this attempt at assassination he was now seeking revenge. He had been taken to Franklin for treatment and had not yet recovered from his wound, as he was still reclining in his bed. Having been a frequent guest at the American House, he received me very cordially, extending his hand and ordering our release and an escort beyond his pickets. Once through his lines, we hastened with all the speed that whip and short-cuts across the prairie could give to reach Lawrence and apprise the people of the danger to the load of arms that we had passed at the Wakarusa. But it was not thought worth the risk to undertake their rescue, as they would



PIONEER SCENE NEAR LAWRENCE, 1856.



certainly fall into the hands of the company at Franklin before help could reach them. It was afterward learned that this was their fate.

The condition of affairs at Lawrence was found to be more serious than I anticipated. It was evident from the lawless demeanor of the bands, and their open boasting, that the execution of writs for the arrest of certain citizens was only a pretext for the introduction of a mob that should, under guise of legal authority, destroy the town. The invasion of the previous winter, when eighteen hundred men under Jones beleaguered the town, had failed for want of a legal process to fit the case, and the support of the governor. This failure had taught the method of success. An indictment had been procured by the grand jury, under Judge Leconte, against the hotel and the two newspapers, and an order for the abatement of these would open the way for the destruction of the town. As this indictment is both a legal curiosity and the occasion of a historic event, it is here given in full:

"The grand jury, sitting for the adjourned term of the first district court in and for the county of Douglas, in the territory of Kansas, beg leave to report to the honorable court that, from the evidence laid before them, showing them that the newspaper known as *The Herald of Freedom*, published at Lawrence, has from time to time issued publications of the most inflammatory and seditious character, denying the legality of the territorial authorities, advising and commanding forcible resistance to the same, demoralizing the popular mind, and rendering life and property unsafe, even to the extent of advising assassination as a last resort;

"Also, that the paper known as *The Kansas Free State* has been similarly engaged, and has recently reported the resolutions of a public meeting in Johnson county, in this territory, in which resistance to the territorial laws, even unto blood, has been agreed upon; and we respectfully recommend their abatement as a nuisance.

"Also, that we are satisfied that the building known as the "Free State hotel," in Lawrence, has been constructed with the view to military occupation and defense, regularly parapeted and portholed for the use of cannon and small arms, and could only have been designed as a stronghold of resistance to law, thereby endangering the public safety and encouraging rebellion and sedition in this country; and respectfully recommend that steps be taken whereby this nuisance may be removed.

"OWEN C. STEWART, *Foreman.*"

This indictment was accepted by Jones, without verdict of jury or judgment of court, as authority for its execution, as will appear hereafter.

Realizing the danger to our property, brother Thomas joined me in a communication to Governor Shannon, asking protection against the threatened destruction, explaining to him that while the building was the property of the Emigrant Aid Company, it had been furnished by us at a heavy expense with costly equipment and a large stock of supplies, and as it had not yet been opened or used by any who were obnoxious to the territorial authorities, we should not be amenable for the Emigrant Aid Company or any of the people of Lawrence. To this appeal the governor sent a verbal reply, expressing regret that we had taken possession of the hotel and giving some encouragement to believe that our property at least might be exempt from destruction. With this ray of hope we visited the governor on the following day, more earnestly to urge upon him our claims to protection. We also carried an appeal from the committee of

safety, on behalf of the citizens of the town. To this appeal Shannon responded that the citizens of Lawrence were in rebellion against the laws and were prepared to resist their execution, and that nothing but their submission to the territorial authorities would entitle them to protection. It was with difficulty that we obtained access to the governor, so closely was he beset with self-constituted guards. Messengers from Lawrence were compelled to run the gantlet of a hostile camp that was daily becoming more exacting. So the governor furnished us this pass:

LECOMPTON, May 18, 1856.

The bearers of this, S. W. and T. B. Eldridge, desire to return to Lawrence this evening and return in the morning.

Now, therefore, all persons will permit these gentlemen to go and return without molestation or delay.

WILSON SHANNON,  
*Governor Kansas Territory.*

I. B. DONALSON, *United States Marshal, Kansas Territory.*

Notwithstanding our pass, which was directed to "all persons," we were halted and taken prisoners as we passed a camp of some twenty-five horsemen, that proved to be the band which afterward obtained notoriety under "Col. Warren D. Wilkes, of South Carolina." Summoning what courage was at my command, I inquired, "Who is in command of this outfit?" Doctor Stringfellow, who assumed to be the spokesman, and who had often been entertained at our Kansas City hotel, came forward smiling and asked, "What are you doing here, Colonel?" Respectfully, I replied, "I don't know. You tell me." With this he summoned a sergeant, who escorted us safely beyond the picket lines.

On the following day we returned to Lecompton to importune the marshal and to present other propositions from the citizens of Lawrence, who now offered the marshal their services, and proposed, if he would supply them with weapons, to assist him in the protection of property and the execution of his writs. This offer the marshal declined, alleging lack of arms to supply them. It is needless to explain that this offer was made with a certainty that it would not be accepted, and was intended to expose Marshal Donaldson's real purpose. At all the conferences the leaders of the rabble beset the governor and dictated his replies. The most assuming of these was Colonel Titus, of Florida, who had gained his notoriety as a Cuban filibuster. To the proposition of the citizens of Lawrence he interposed with the declaration that the printing offices must be destroyed—that nothing less would satisfy the boys from South Carolina! But the safety of the hotel was assured. The marshal promised that if no resistance was offered he would enter the town with a small posse of unarmed men, leaving the body of the posse outside, and that he would not dismiss them in the vicinity of the town.

At this interview Governor Shannon disclaimed all authority over the forces summoned by the marshal and refused to interfere with that officer's operations. When implored to summon to his aid the forces of Colonel Sumner of the United States army, who could be relied on to prevent illegal depredations, he peremptorily refused. And when reminded that the marshal's forces had publicly avowed their determination to wipe out Lawrence, he replied that the people of that town must take such con-

sequences as they had brought on themselves, and that though he had authority to call out the United States troops, he would not do so. We then urged upon him that the perpetration of these outrages, and the refusal of the authorities to interpose, would ultimately drive the people to resistance and precipitate the horrors of a civil war. He turned angrily away, and with the declaration, "War then it is, by God!" quitted the room.

The day following was one of intense anxiety, tempered with the hope that the extreme violence and destruction threatened might yet be averted, or at least moderated. Deputy Marshal Fain visited the town and in a private conversation expressed the opinion that the hotel would be spared, though it was still the determination of the sheriff that the two printing offices should be demolished. But it was a hope not to be realized.

By sunrise on the morning of the 21st, Mount Oread was astir with active preparations for the assault upon Lawrence. A battery of four brass pieces, manned and ready, frowned upon the business portion of the town. Supporting it were some 200 cavalry, their arms and red banner glittering in the morning sun. These were reinforced by company after company, mounted and on foot, that came marching around the crest of the bluff from the California road, their number magnified by their position and the method of their approach—an imposing array of some 800 men. There were D. R. Atchison, United States senator from Missouri, with his Platte county riflemen, manning two of the pieces of artillery; the Kickapoo Rangers under Colonel Clarkson, composed of residents of Missouri, with just enough citizens of Kansas to excuse the name; Col. Warren D. Wilkes, with his South Carolina fire eaters; Colonel Titus, with his command from the far South. All these had been marshaled at Leecompton. From the camps about Franklin came the forces under Colonel Boone, a government freighter from Westport, Colonel Buford, of Alabama, and other southern leaders. With them, either as advisers, legal counselors or commanders, were Gen. B. F. Stringfellow and his brother, Dr. J. H., the editor of the *Squatter Sovereign*, with his associate, "Bob" Kelley, and the distinguished lawyer, Peter T. Able. This affected strategy, with its display of military maneuvers, and attendant legal advisers, more numerous even than the colonels, in face of the knowledge that no resistance was contemplated, demonstrated that the marshal had more serious business with this army than the service of a few writs, and that his demands would be enforced to the utmost extremity. It was also evident that any show of defense would only aggravate the impending doom. Resistance meant not only the destruction of the town, but jeopardy to the cause of freedom, as it would place the Free-state party in the false position in which their enemies were attempting to force them. It had been agreed upon that the only hope of safety for the community lay in the absenting of themselves of all those for whom writs had been issued, as well as all others who were known to be personally obnoxious to proslavery men, that their presence might not afford the mob the desired opportunity for an attack; and that the citizens should, as much as possible, keep off the

streets, avoid collecting in crowds, and quietly pursue their usual occupations. The commandant of the posse was extremely cautious, and evidently feared, from the unwonted stillness of the town, a mine or an ambush. Before advancing he sent down spies to learn the purposes of the citizens and what measures had been taken for defense. On the spies reporting that all was quiet in the town, and the people busy about their work, Deputy Marshal Fain, with a posse of ten men unarmed, rode down to the hotel, and in compliance with the proposition previously made by the citizens, summoned as an additional posse Dr. James Garvin, J. A. Perry, C. W. Topliff, Wm. Jones, S. W. and T. B. Eldridge to assist him in making arrests. G. W. Deitzler and G. W. Smith, the only parties found for whom writs had been issued, quietly submitted to arrest, and were taken in charge by the marshal.

In the meantime we had prepared an elegant dinner, the best that the fresh and abundant stores in the cellar would afford—more of a banquet than dinner. To this the marshal and his posse, with a number of his legal and political counselors, were invited. But after disposing of the dinner and drinking the costly wines, the officer, with his retinue, departed without tendering payment or acknowledging the hospitality, and sought his headquarters on Mount Oread behind the battery.

There he dismissed his posse and turned it over to S. J. Jones as sheriff of Douglas county, for the purpose of executing the orders of Judge Leconte's court. Here it should be said that the transfer of authority from Federal to county officer was known to but few of the citizens till afterward. In repudiation and resistance of law by the free-state men, a distinction had been drawn between Federal officers and those exercising authority under the territorial legislature—a distinction, however, which in this case could be of no practical avail.

On receiving the command, Sheriff Jones, at the head of one of the companies of mounted men, marched down the hill, and dashing into town halted his force in front of the Free State hotel. Calling for General Pomeroy and shaking hands with him with a profusion of courtesy, he addressed him as follows:

"General Pomeroy, I recognize you as one of the leading citizens here, and as one who can act for the people of Lawrence. I demand that all the arms in Lawrence be given up, or we will bombard the town." Taking out his watch he added, "I give you five minutes to decide on this proposition, and half an hour to stack the arms in the street. I am authorized to make this demand by the First United States district court of Kansas."

General Pomeroy hastened upstairs to consult the committee of safety, which had taken direction of affairs, and returning in a few minutes, replied, "The cannon will be delivered up, but the rifles are private property in possession of individual owners, and not under our control." Jones replied, "Very well, then, give up the cannon." On this Pomeroy, accompanied by some of the other members of the committee, led a portion of the posse to the rear of a building across the street and pointed out the place of concealment. On removing a portion of the loose underpinning of the building, the cannon, with a few Sharps rifles that had

not been distributed, were drawn out and taken possession of by the posse.

These cannon consisted of a brass howitzer and three or four smaller pieces, devised and manufactured, as Governor Robinson states in his "Kansas Conflict," by Hon. Eli Thayer, carrying balls about an inch in diameter, and designed, as he also states, to pick off border-ruffian officers, before coming within musket range, thus saving the necessity of slaughtering the rank and file.<sup>31</sup>

As General Pomeroy has been censured by all who have written about this incident, for undue servility in surrendering the arms, it is only rendering belated justice to him to state that he was merely executing the order of the committee to whom the citizens of Lawrence had committed their safety. Jones had not demanded the privilege of search, but the delivery of the arms, to be stacked in the street, in half an hour, on penalty of the bombardment of the town. Defense was impossible. The safety of defenseless families was at stake more than that of the resistants, the most obnoxious of them having wisely absented themselves to avert the threatened catastrophe that their indiscrete acts had invited. As the firstlings of the flock had escaped, there was no other acceptable offering to appease the wrath of an offended executive.

That Jones's threat was not intended as a bluff, or as bravado for effect on his own party, is abundantly shown by his subsequent conduct, and was foreshadowed by the outrages previously perpetrated by the separate bands composing his force. The cold-blooded murder of Thomas Barber near Lawrence; the inhuman butchery of R. P. Brown at Easton; the wanton murder of the innocent boy Jones on the Wakarusa; the killing of Stewart within sight of town; the last two of these murders occurring within forty-eight hours of the descent on Lawrence—all perpetrated by the bands that had gathered at the sheriff's call, flaunting their characteristic banners and boasting of their savagery—left no doubt as to their bloody purpose. The border-ruffian leaders everywhere interpreted the call for a military force as an invitation to a bloody feast. The *Atchison Squatter Sovereign*, that most faithfully expressed the purposes of the Proslavery party, having for its editor one high up in the councils of his party, Dr. J. H. Stringfellow, member of the legislature and brother to the general whose name, coupled with that of Atchison, stood for the whole proslavery movement, in publishing the call, announced:

"We are now in favor of leveling Lawrence and chastising the traitors there congregated, should it result in total destruction of the Union."<sup>32</sup>

And in its issue of a week later, when reason had time to assert itself after the flush of excitement, it advocated as the motto of its party, "War to the knife, and knife to the hilt; neither asking quarters nor granting them."<sup>33</sup> The *Kickapoo Pioneer*, the *Leavenworth Herald* and numerous

31. The statement in the "Kansas Conflict" verifying this has not been found.

32. This quotation appears in an editorial entitled "Hostilities Again Commenced in Kansas!" published in the *Squatter Sovereign* of April 29, 1856. The call to arms was printed in the issue of May 13, 1856.

33. A search through the *Squatter Sovereign* of May 27, 1856, the first issue after the sacking of Lawrence, fails to reveal the words here quoted. But the issue of June 10 contains, in an editorial entitled "More Outrages by the Abolitionists," the following: "Let us retaliate in the same manner—a free fight is all we desire! If murder and assassina-

papers over the border were filled with similar appeals to the criminal instincts of the lawless class that were called into this service. Constructive resistance had been made the excuse for marshaling an organized mob, and would furnish the desired provocation for the execution of threats. For the committee of safety to have given that provocation would have been criminal; and humiliating as the act may have been, Pomeroy, in surrendering the arms, did the only wise thing possible under the conditions.

While this was transpiring couriers were hastily passing between the sheriff and the headquarters on the hill. The arms that had been surrendered were sent away, and the activity among the forces betokened some further purpose. Jones now made a demand on me for the evacuation of the hotel, giving two hours for the removal of the furniture. It was obviously impossible to remove in two hours what it had taken as many weeks to place; and with no storage space obtainable, it was useless to attempt to do more than remove our families with such belongings as we could carry away. The families consisted of my wife and four daughters, brother Thomas, Alman Clapp and wife, and two hired girls. My daughter Mary, prostrated with severe sickness, had to be carried out. Two hacks that we had at this end of the line received the families and such personal effects as we could pack up and save in the flurry of the occasion. In these, containing all that was left to us of our abundant stores and expensive furnishings, we drove to the outskirts of the town and awaited the destruction of the building. In the meantime the force on Mount Oread was in motion and approaching the town as if attacking a fortification, evidently trying to convince themselves that they were guarding against an ambush and overawing threatened resistance. Two of the cannon, trained on the town, were stationed on the hill. The others advanced—first one, manned and supported by a company of infantry, to the foot of the hill; then the other, manned and supported in like manner, advanced three hundred or four hundred yards under cover of the first. Thus alternately they moved along Massachusetts street till planted in front of the Free State hotel. Following the cannon came the main force, horsemen and infantry; the companies distinguished by their banners, variously inscribed, "Southern Rights," "South Carolina," "The Supremacy of the White Race," and other mottoes expressive of their hostility to the free-state men.

The first attack was by one of the companies under the leadership of G. W. Clark, a United States Indian agent, notorious as the murderer of Barber. He had been assigned the destruction of the printing office of the *Kansas Free State*, published by Josiah Miller and R. G. Elliott, that occupied the upper floor over the store room of W. H. and C. S. Duncan.

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tion is the program of the day, we are in favor of filling the bill. Let not the knives of the proslavery men be sheathed while there is one abolitionist in the territory. As they show no quarter to our men, they deserve none from us. Let our motto be written in blood upon our flags, 'Death to all Yankees and traitors in Kansas!'

On April 24, 1857, Secretary Stanton visited Lawrence and made a speech in which he said: "If any man here is prepared to say that he will resist those laws [the bogus], with that man I declare war!—war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt."

It is probable that after the lapse of years these two epigrams became confused in the memory of Mr. Eldridge.

The ruffians ascended the stairs cautiously as if fearing an ambuscade, but once in the room they vied with each other in the work of destruction. The press and fixtures were broken up with axe and sledgehammer. Files and exchanges, with a six months' stock of paper and a half-printed edition of the *Free State* were tossed through the windows into the street and scattered by the winds over the prairie for a mile around. Cases of type were carried to the river and thrown in.<sup>34</sup> Boxes of books, constituting a library of 300 volumes, were hacked to pieces with sabers; and when the destruction was complete the company marched back to its quarters, each member carrying a mutilated book on the point of his bayonet. Another company entered the office of the *Herald of Freedom*. The red flag of the South Carolina company was hoisted over the building, and the work of destruction begun. Everything pertaining to the office was reduced to complete ruin.

While the destruction of the printing offices was going on a detail was engaged in removing the furniture from the hotel. They did their work with a diligence that, like children preparing for a bonfire, betrayed their impatience to crown their effort with the final catastrophe—the conflagration of the hotel. The furniture and furnishings were tossed into the street and treated with little less vandalism than the contents of the printing offices.

When this had proceeded to the satisfaction of the impatient crowd, and the desirable contents of the cellar had been appropriated, Sheriff Jones announced as a final warning that in five minutes he would begin the bombardment. The red flag of the South Carolina band that had been placed on the *Herald of Freedom* office was hoisted over the hotel, and preparations were hurried forward for the destruction. Captain Hiram Bledsoe, who had served under Colonel Doniphan at the battle of Sacramento, Mexico, in the Mexican War, where these cannon had been captured, was in charge of the gun trained on the hotel. D. R. Atchison claimed the honor of directing the first shot; but being somewhat unsteady, presumably from indulging too freely in the contents of the hotel cellar, he aimed too high and the ball passed over the top of the building, and, screaming through the air like a steam whistle, lit in the western portion of the town.<sup>35</sup>

Some thirty shots were fired more accurately, producing no more effect than perforating the concrete walls. Despairing to destroy it in this way, two kegs of powder were placed in the basement and exploded, but produced no serious effect. Piles of paper from the printing offices were then brought in and fired, when soon the whole interior was ablaze, and

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34. Some week or ten days after the destruction of the *Free State* office, three empty type cases were found floating on the Missouri river opposite Lexington. On being brought to shore they were divided as trophies among the three printing offices of the town. One of these offices was removed to Platte City, and with it went the relic. The editor of the *Free State*, which had been reestablished at Delaware, Leavenworth county, the following year (1857), on a visit to Platte City was shown the water-stained case and given its history. He at once identified it as a *Free State* case by its peculiar construction, differing from those used in the other newspaper office in Lawrence.

35. In the late '80's one of these balls was found by Richard C. Elliott, son of the proprietor of the old *Free State*. After laying imbedded in the soil for some thirty years it had been exposed while plowing for a gutter on Illinois street.

the flames bursting through the windows and shooting through the roof illuminated the country for miles around.

While the flames were at their height, Sheriff Jones, who had been all the while complacently watching the destruction, raised himself in his saddle and addressed his posse:

"Gentlemen, this is the happiest day of my life. I determined to make the fanatics bow before me in the dust and kiss the territorial laws. I have done it, by G—d. You are now dismissed. The orders of the court have been executed."

The dismissal of the posse was accepted by them as an invitation to plunder. Private houses were pillaged, money, clothing and arms, wherever found, were taken, stores were entered and goods appropriated. This pillaging was not confined to the rabble, but was participated in by at least some of the leaders. Doctor Stringfellow walked into the store of Paul R. Brocks, and, appropriating two boxes of cigars, complacently remarked to his companions, "Well, boys, I guess this is all the booty I want." Having sated themselves with plunder and revenge, the posse withdrew at sunset and marched back to their encampment, the several companies displaying trophies that signalized the special work of destruction in which they had been engaged. Clark's company, that had destroyed the *Free State* printing office, carried books on their bayonets; those engaged in the demolition of the hotel bedecked themselves with the elegant curtains and costly trimmings taken from it; others displayed booty from the stores. Some of this paraphernalia, with plunder loaded in their wagons, they carried back to Missouri, flaunting them in the streets of Kansas City. Thomas H. Gladstone, who had come to Kansas as a correspondent of the *London Times*, and who published his observations in a book entitled, "Kansas; or, Squatter Life and Border Warfare in the Far West," met some of them on their return, and described their costume as "a grotesque intermixture, . . . having crossed their native red rough shirt with a satin vest or narrow dress coat pillaged from some Lawrence Yankee, or having girded themselves with the cords and tassels which the day before had ornamented the curtains of the Free State hotel."

The rear guard, when leaving about dusk, fired the residence of Governor Robinson on Mount Oread after they had plundered it, carrying away, among other things, papers that they made free to use against free-state men.

A night in camp brought a spirit of depression to the posse, where the day before there had been one of triumph. The conduct of the citizens had shown them how grossly they had been deceived when called out under pretext of suppressing organized resistance to law. A knowledge of the true position that the people of Lawrence occupied, their refusal to comply with the territorial laws, rather than to actively resist them, and their helpless submission to outrage, brought to the leaders who were capable of such an emotion a feeling of shame that led to mutual recrimination and open charges against Jones of misrepresentation. Even Atchison, Buford and Jackson, who had been the most violent in their threats, were now the strongest in their denunciation of those



whom they found had deceived them. Subsequent events showed that they were moved more by regret that the people of Lawrence had not given them a justification for their outrages. The following morning Atchison's company of Platte county riflemen, desiring to cross the river on their way home, halted on the outskirts, and sending a messenger into town, asked the privilege of passing along Massachusetts street. As the people were powerless to hinder them, no objection was offered, and slowly the horsemen, with a cannon in the front and another in the rear, moved along the vacated street with their guns at shoulder but hands on the locks, casting furtive glances at the upper windows as they passed, as if fearing an ambuscade. By the rear cannon, with a few of his companions, rode Atchison, as the chief mourner in a funeral procession, with downcast look, seeming to avoid the conscious gaze centered upon him; brown coated and dejected, as if truly auguring that the shot fired by him the previous day, in the attempt to extend slavery, opened the armed conflict that six years later would end in its entire destruction. To vindicate their pretensions of threatened resistance they crossed the ferry under cover of their artillery, and returned to Missouri humbled but exasperated and determined to seek a justification for a future raid that might wipe out their disgrace.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### RETURN TO KANSAS CITY.

WHEN the bombardment ceased, and the flames from the hotel showed that the destruction was complete, the conveyances from which our families had witnessed the closing scene were turned toward Kansas City, while I returned to the town for a conference with a committee of citizens to consider the new condition of affairs. It had been agreed that our families should stop overnight at the house of Paschal Fish, a Shawnee Indian who lived near the present town of Eudora, and who was an active sympathizer with the free-state men. At the Blue Jacket ford of the Wakarusa the party was halted by a posse encamped there, and brother Thomas was called out and taken before the commander. The experiences of the day had been such that it was a time of intense anxiety with the remaining occupants of the hacks. Though finally released and permitted to pass, it was thought not prudent to remain at Fish's overnight. This fear was prompted by G. W. Brewerton, a correspondent of the *New York Herald*, who was a passenger in one of the hacks. He made his representations from knowledge he had obtained from mingling sympathetically with the border ruffians. Later events, however, justified the conjecture that this was only the ruse of a reporter to expedite his correspondence. So, since no other accommodation was available, and not wishing to jeopardize a friendly Indian, the hacks set out on a night journey to Kansas City. Traveling all night over a lonely road, in hunger, sickness and anxiety, the party reached the American House in early morning, only to find a continuance of the same troubles, perils and anxieties, magnified as they continued.

The committee, for whose consultation I remained, met in west Lawrence in the cabin of Senator Lane, who was absent at this time in Washington. We spent the night and the following day in the formulation of a memorial to the President, detailing the events and recounting the acts of the territorial officials that culminated in the outrage of the 21st of May. The committee was composed of J. M. Winchell, who placed the matter in form, C. W. Babcock, Dr. S. B. Prentiss, O. E. Learnard, S. W. Eldridge, Lyman Allen, L. G. Hine, Joseph Cracklin and John Perry. This memorial finds a conspicuous place in the documentary history of Kansas, and is pronounced by one of the writers of Kansas history as the most perfect indictment of the administration and the most complete vindication of the policy of the people of Kansas ever put on paper.

The redress sought through the memorial could only come by the removal of Governor Shannon and the appointment of a successor who should administer impartial justice between the two parties and prevent interference by lawless bands from without the territory.

The committee by a vote authorized me to carry this memorial to Washington, with instructions to personally urge it upon President

Pierce and present the claims of the citizens for damages committed by the mob. The mission was one of vital interest to the people of Kansas, and indeed involved the very existence of the Free-state party. It was also one of no slight personal danger. To get through the lines of the victorious border ruffians, whose returning bands were found at every crossing, held an element of mischance. Beyond that they were rampant in the border towns and infested every route of travel through Missouri.

Having accepted the mission, I found myself confronted with the difficulty of obtaining a conveyance, and it was only by canvassing the town that even an old and rickety buggy, with horse to correspond, could be obtained. At this time any document inculcating the Proslavery party was held by the border ruffians to be treasonable, and the right of search was rigidly maintained. But from some streak of gallantry stronger than partizanship, it was not enforced against ladies. Therefore, for the safe conduct of the document, Mrs. William Hutchinson offered her services to accompany me to Fish's, where it could be taken in charge by my wife. Upon our arrival at that place, and learning that my family had been compelled to proceed without waiting for us, we found ourselves in a serious predicament. Our horse was not equal to the trip to Kansas City, and Mrs. Hutchinson had left home with the expectation of returning immediately. While dubiously considering what to do in the emergency, I saw my own horse and buggy approaching, driven by G. W. Bronson, my wife having sent it for me from Kansas City. Having fed and rested my horse, we exchanged rigs with Bronson. Mrs. Hutchinson, realizing the urgency of the occasion, consented to continue the adventurous trip; and intrusting to Bronson a message for her husband, we set out on our journey so late in the day that darkness had settled down upon us before we reached the first creek crossing. As we proceeded the night revealed clearly what we were most fearful of. The woods adjoining the road were lighted up with campfires, and as we approached we heard sounds of revelry. It was one of the bands on its return from the sack of Lawrence, and from the noisy demonstrations we concluded they were all drunk on the spoils from the cellar of the Free State hotel. The border ruffian was always most dangerous in the nighttime, and traveling by night was liable to awaken suspicion. But as there was no other crossing we were compelled to accept the situation, and we moved forward cautiously. Feeling that the emergency might demand extreme measures, I asked Mrs. Hutchinson if she could shoot.

"Yes, I can," was the prompt and determined reply.

Having three revolvers I gave her one, with instructions not to shoot until I did—but then to let them have it. By crouching low in the buggy and passing slowly over the stream we managed to slip noiselessly through the camp and escape challenge. After like experiences at other creek crossings—for all of them seemed infested with an assorted band of desperadoes—we found ourselves in the vicinity of Westport, having so far successfully run the gantlet under cover of the night. The most hazardous risk yet lay before us.

Westport, at all times a dangerous point for free-state men to pass, was at this time overrun by the lawless bands of "Buford men," and the commotion caused by the Lawrence raid had set it boiling with excite-

ment. The drunken orgies that marked the nightly gathering of these gangs usually kept many of the most vicious of them awake through the night and stimulated them to reckless adventure. Although past midnight, we had but slight chance to pass through the streets without observation, and discovery would have meant serious jeopardy both to the mission with which I was intrusted and to myself personally. As there was no convenient road by which the town could be avoided, the only recourse was to make one. So delivering the lines to Mrs. Hutchinson with directions to follow me as I called to her in the dark, I laid down the rails of a number of "Old Virginia worm" fences. Thus opening a way through the fields, we reached the public highway near Kansas City, and joined my family at three o'clock in the morning of the 24th. After a day's rest Mrs. Hutchinson returned by stage to Lawrence.

I found the commotion in Kansas City more violent, mobs more threatening and personal danger more imminent than when I left it a week previously. Private business and the impending danger to our hotel there forced me to remain for a few days. In the meantime the news of the killing of the proslavery men on Pottawatomie creek, which occurred on the night of the 24th, was brought to town, increasing the excitement to a frenzy. The killing of the five men, harrowing enough in its true details, was magnified as to numbers and exaggerated in atrocity as the rumors were repeated. The five victims were swelled by the reports to eight, headed by Deputy United States Marshal Capt. H. C. Pate and James McGee, adding intensity to the flame and a provocation to reprisals. With every fresh rumor the papers were issuing inflammatory extras. These were scattered throughout the crowds and on the steamboats as they landed, striving to stir up a new invasion and to convert a subsequent act of retaliation into a justification for their own unprovoked outrage.

The following extract will show the character of these appeals: "Murder is the watchword and midnight deed of a scattered and scouting band of abolitionists. . . . Men, peaceable and quiet, cannot travel on the public roads of Kansas without being caught, searched and imprisoned, and perhaps their lives taken. No southerner dare venture alone and unarmed on her roads." The effect on the lawless element that infested the border, of such false charges, can be easily conceived. Passion was excited into frenzy, and crime against free-state men gained the reward of merit. In the words of one who had felt it, "The western border of Missouri was at this time a seething hell." Threats of destroying the American hotel were becoming more frequent. Shots were nightly fired through the windows and secret incendiaries had to be closely guarded against. Though the responsible citizens depreciated the threatened destruction of the hotel, and the mayor had gone so far as to set a guard over it for a night or two, they were overslaughed by the outside element, and declined to become longer responsible for its safety. Then a committee of business men appointed by the citizens waited upon us and insisted on our selling out to some one who was in sympathy with the mob, as the only means of saving the property. This proposition we were constrained to accept, and brother Edwin a few days later transferred the hotel with its belongings to H. W. Chiles, who was acceptable to the lawless element.

## CHAPTER IX.

### TRIP TO WASHINGTON.

THE *Polar Star* was the favorite passenger boat on the Missouri, both for the speed and regularity of its trips and for the elegance of its accommodations; and while northern companies aboard it had been disarmed on their upward trip and turned back, and Governor Robinson had been taken from it without authority at Lexington, when attempting to leave Kansas, yet the boat and its officers, who were southern men, were regarded with a certain consideration that commanded respect for such guests as they might favor with their special attention. I had determined that I would not "escape" from Kansas, nor resort to any subterfuge or concealment, but go openly on the best boat on the river. I was a representative of the people, commissioned to present their cause to the President, and as an American citizen I had a perfect right to take passage on any boat on which I could pay the fare. Since the mob assumed to supervise the arrivals and departures, lest mine should be interfered with my wife and Mrs. Coates took the precaution to accompany me to the wharf, walking on either side of me. Safely through the crowd that was scanning the passengers, and on board the boat, I waved my handkerchief in adieu to friends on the wharf as the boat steamed away. For safe-keeping I again committed my papers to a lady, Mrs. Hubbard, who was returning to Boston.

Going upon the upper deck, a favorite place on a pleasant day, I met an acquaintance, R. T. Van Horn, the editor of the Kansas City *Enterprise*. He was an influential man, and his paper was regarded as an organ of the Proslavery party. While engaged in conversation we were disturbed by two men of the officious and insolent type that marked the self-constituted inspectors of Kansas emigration. One of them approached with the inquisitive remark, "Van Horn, we understand Colonel Eldridge is aboard." Van Horn's bluff reply was, "Is that so? Go and see what he looks like." While noncommittal, it satisfied them that they had no ally that day in the editor of the *Enterprise*, and it relieved me from any further surveillance. The officers of the *Polar Star* treated me with marked consideration, seating Mr. Van Horn and myself to the right and left of the head of the table.

What a delightful sensation of freedom I felt upon stepping on the Illinois shore to board the cars for Chicago! To meet with sympathy and welcome from all, with an assurance of safety, instead of suspicion, hostility and threats and an ever-present sense of danger, was like buoyant health suddenly restored to an invalid. The recent outrages in Lawrence had produced a sensation throughout the North that determined the leading issue in the approaching presidential campaign, and made any late arrival from the scene of the conflict an attraction.

To the Republicans the attraction was that of sympathy; to the opposition it was of curiosity and a desire to find some justification for the course of the administration. On board the train I was tackled by one of the latter, and as argument was never my forte, I found myself worsted by a fluent apologist of the administration. Greatly to my relief, a stranger came up, and, offering his hand, asked if I was Colonel Eldridge from Kansas. On my answering in the affirmative he asked permission to join in the controversy, which resulted in the quick confusion of my adversary. When the conflict had subsided I was gratified to find that this knight of the tongue who had come to my rescue was no other than the eminent Republican senator from Michigan, Zack Chandler. This companionship made the remainder of my way to Chicago a gratification.

At the Briggs House I met Governor Reeder, who had just arrived after his escape from Kansas; also James H. Lane, who had been invited to address a meeting the following evening at the park.<sup>36</sup> Posters were distributed announcing that three prominent Kansans, Governor Reeder, General Lane and Colonel Eldridge, with other eminent speakers, would address the meeting. A very attractive program it was designed to be. At the hour fixed the committee in charge escorted the "eminent speakers" to the platform and placed us on exhibition. In the park, illuminated by countless burners, was a great concourse, such as no hall on the continent could contain, and presenting a striking contrast to what I had so recently left behind me.

The assemblages on the border were gatherings of bands recruited from the vicious and lawless element, turbulent and riotous in their demonstrations, utterly devoid of all the finer emotions, but profuse in the display of the grosser passions. They were coarse in their expressions and responded with shouts and yells to the fierce harangues of their leaders. With both speakers and audience whisky furnished no small part of the inspiration. Here all was different. This was a spontaneous outpouring of people drawn together by a noble impulse, that proved the cause of Kansas lay near the northern heart. While it was enthusiastic and demonstrative, it was earnest and determined. Its heartiest responses were to sentiments of honor and patriotism; its determinations judicious and practical and its liberality phenomenal. As this was one of the first and the greatest of the popular assemblages of that historic movement that resulted in the freedom of Kansas, and ultimately in the overthrow of slavery, a graphic description of it, copied from the *Chicago Daily Tribune* of June 2, 1856, is worthy of preservation:

"Language is inadequate to give the reader a conception of the effect of the recital of that tale of woe which men from Kansas had to tell. The rigid muscles and the frowning brows told a story to the looker-on that types cannot repeat. From the fact that the immense crowd kept their feet from eight to twelve o'clock, that even then they were unwilling the speakers should cease, or that the contributions should stop; from the fact that workingmen, who have only the wages of the day for the purchase of the day's bread, emptied the contents of their pockets into the general fund; that sailors threw in their earnings; that widows sent up their savings; that boys contributed their pence; that those who had no

36. This meeting was held in the courthouse square on Saturday evening, May 31, 1856.

money gave what they had to spare; that those who had nothing to give offered to go as settlers and do their duty to freedom on that now consecrated soil; that every bold declaration for liberty, every allusion to the Revolution of '76, and to the possibility that the battles of that period were to be fought over again in Kansas, were received as those things most to be desired—something of the tone and temper of the meeting may be imagined.

"Take it with its attending circumstances—the shortness of the notice, the character of the assembled multitude and the work which was accomplished—it was the most remarkable meeting ever held in the state. We believe it will inaugurate a new era in Illinois. We believe it is the precursor of the liberation of Kansas from the hand of the oppressor and of an all-pervading revolution at home.

"About half past twelve, Sunday having come, the meeting unwillingly adjourned and the crowd reluctantly went home. At a later hour the "Star-Spangled Banner" and the "Marseillaise," sung by bands of men whose hearts were full of the spirit of these magnificent hymns, were the only evidences of the event that we have undertaken to describe."

This was the estimate of this great assemblage by one of the ablest and least sensational of western journals, whose editor, Joseph Medill, was one of the sympathetic, active and efficient friends of Kansas. The vibrations from this assemblage were felt throughout the North, and the "great Chicago meeting" became the standard that measured the noblest movements in behalf of freedom in Kansas.

But though gratified beyond expression at the sympathetic outbursts of the audience at every mention of Kansas, my own situation on the platform became more embarrassing as the speaker next preceding me on the program was called to the front. I had met border ruffians singly and in crowds, had faced Sheriff Jones with his posse at the sack of Lawrence, walked through the streets of Kansas City when it was in possession of a mob howling for blood, and had run the gantlet of carousing bands of desperadoes without losing courage—but I had never before faced a battery of ten thousand faces turned toward me. As my name stood next on the list I tried to think up an apology to offer instead of a speech, but no words would come to me. To stammer and blunder before such an audience I could not bear. Right then, after keeping my courage through weeks of personal danger, I succumbed to stage fright, and quietly whispering to the chairman that I was compelled to take the eastern train which was soon to start, I retreated from the platform as gracefully as I could and escaped the terrible ordeal.

From Chicago I started for Boston, but on request stopped over in Detroit for a big demonstration in the cause of Kansas, at which Lane and Reeder were to speak. Here the committee respected my oratorical timidity, satisfied to place me on exhibition as a live man from Kansas and not compelling me to apologize to the audience.

However, it was not always sympathetic treatment that was received on this journey. A spice of controversy, sometimes piquant, was often met with and gave zest to the intercourse which was becoming somewhat monotonous from its overflowing sympathy. On board the train between Albany and Springfield was a scion of chivalry who boasted of his ownership of slaves, some of whom he asserted were waiting upon his family at a northern watering place. He had engaged in controversy an elderly

gentleman of quiet and dignified manner, who declined to back his opinion with a bet or to continue the conversation after the southerner had expressed his approval of the brutal attack in the senate upon Sumner, then of but recent occurrence and the subject of much comment. The exultant look that he cast around him on the success of this method of silencing an opponent showed that he expected a verdict from the audience. Detecting the swagger of the border under a display of assumed refinement, and aware that genuine jewels are never flaunted before a crowd, I advanced to the relief of the elderly gentleman. Meeting the southerner with his own method of argument, I offered to bet that he did not own a negro in the world. He promptly accepted the offer. But when I placed \$200 in the hands of the conductor, to be his when he should cover it and send legal proof that he was a slave owner, he drew out his pocket book, fumbled over a bundle of bills, hesitated, and backed down. The shout that went up from the car produced a collapse of his arrogance, and he slunk away at the first opportunity. This by way of following Solomon's advice: "Answer a fool according to his folly, that he be not wise in his own conceit."

On my arrival in Boston a meeting of the Emigrant Aid Company was called, at which the condition in Lawrence was considered, and it was decided not to rebuild the hotel. To me this decision was a great disappointment, as I had vowed before Sheriff Jones, at the time of its destruction, that I would see a better hotel built on its ruins. I then proposed to buy the property for the purpose of rebuilding myself. The proposition was readily accepted and the transfer made for the sum of \$4,000—a price which measured a large amount of both faith and determination.

As the chief object of my mission was to present the Kansas memorial to the President, I proceeded to Washington. For some days I found it impossible to obtain an interview. While others seemed to have free access to the White House, my cards were returned with a simple refusal that made it evident that I was an unwelcome visitor. Since I could not give up at this stage of the affair, I continued to press my cards until my opportunity was at last rewarded by admission. On entering the President's room I somewhat abruptly stated my errand and presented the memorial. Accepting it the President, half contemptuously, threw it without examination on a table and opened upon me with a tirade against the free-state men of Kansas, charging them with lawlessness, rebellion and treason; with being houseburners, ravishers and desperadoes; by their resistance to the laws of the territory, placing themselves outside the pale of the law, thus foregoing any just claim to protection from the Federal government. He continued his philippic until he exhausted the scurrilous charges fabricated by the border ruffian press.

The atrocious conduct of the territorial officials had aroused such a storm of indignation throughout the North that the very existence of the Democratic party in that section of the Union was threatened. The "crime against Kansas" had been laid at the door of the administration by Senator Sumner. The President himself was smarting under the flagellations administered by Governor Reeder and other former Demo-



crats for his tortuous course towards them, for his contumacious persistence in a policy that was disrupting his party, and for his weakness in submitting to the dictates of Jeff Davis and the extremists of the South. The whole responsibility for the Kansas imbroglio had been fastened upon him. He had been made the scapegoat of his party, and the Cincinnati convention, which had recently denied him a renomination and named Buchanan as his successor, had sent him into the wilderness to bear away the sins of his party.

It was but human that he should be resentful when the cause of his personal misery and political misfortune was thrust upon him. But though his exhaustive outburst dissipated what hope I had for a favorable consideration of the memorial, it aroused me to a determination to resent the charges—to beard the lion in his den. Asking the privilege of replying, which he readily granted, I submitted my claims for consideration. Personally I was a Democrat. I had voted for him for president; my father, also a Democrat, had voted for him, as had my ten uncles and four brothers, all Democrats; and some of them were now victims, as well as myself, of these outrages. But such Democracy as his appointees in Kansas were inflicting upon us we could not bear.

I then rehearsed to him in detail the whole story of the "crime against Kansas" as I had seen it, showing the responsibility of the Federal appointees for the atrocities committed and the necessity for a change of the administration.

The indignation aroused by the President's charges gave me a force and fluency of speech that I never conceived myself capable of, and that I have never been inspired with since. During our interview visitor's cards asking admission were frequently sent in, but were waved aside with the request that I continue. From the first the President seemed deeply interested in my story, and before it was completed his eyes moistened and tears began to trickle down the face that at first had been so stern and indignant. I felt then that my cause was won, and pressed upon him the necessity of superseding the territorial officials with others who would administer impartial justice instead of persecuting the actual citizens. The situation demanded a man for governor with capacity to comprehend conditions, with integrity of purpose and force of character to administer the laws, a man without undue political bias and with firmness to resist the allurements or threats of partisans, and, above all, a man of strict sobriety.

When I had ceased he requested me to be seated, and asked whom I would recommend for governor of Kansas territory. I replied:

"Any man with honest requirements whom you see fit to appoint will suit the people of Kansas."

After naming over a list of public men, some of whom I knew and objected to, and others that he himself passed, John W. Geary was mentioned. I had known something of him while I was engaged in a railroad contract in Pennsylvania and knew his reputation as mayor of San Francisco during a critical period, and readily assented to his appointment. With a cordial shake of the hand the President bade me return to Kansas with the assurance that Geary should be appointed

governor, closing the interview, which had lasted some two hours, with a cordiality that atoned for his chilling reception. The commission of Geary, signed on the 31st of July, was the fulfillment of this pledge.

The services of Governor Geary, who arrived in Kansas in her extreme hour of need, in ridding the territory of the hoards of outlaws that overran it and in establishing security to the citizens form much of the history of the Free-state party from the 9th of September till it was firmly established and beyond fear of assault from without.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION.

**I**N ADDITION to my mission to the President, I had received an appointment as one of the delegates to the national Republican convention called to meet at Philadelphia on the 17th of June, 1856, to formulate a platform and nominate a candidate for President.

As the issues that called this convention into being had their full embodiment in the Kansas question, and as Kansas was made to serve as the watchword and object lesson of the presidential campaign, some recollections of this assemblage will not be inappropriate.

The convention marked an epoch in the political history of the country and was notable for the distinctive character of its delegates, its vital earnestness, and the singleness of purpose which had drawn it together. It had sprung from a convulsion that had stirred the nation to its profoundest depths, and forced to the front a vital issue, dividing the people on sectional lines. The question propounded was: Shall the government be administered in the interest of freedom, or for the nationalization of slavery, with all the consequences that that implies?

The delegates who composed this convention, the advisers and attendants who waited upon it, and even the spectators who witnessed it, were of a type diverse from those who usually take part in political conventions.

There were no boisterous crowds taking possession of the corridors of the hotels assigned to the delegates and shouting for favorite candidates or skirmishing for the control of the convention. And if the demeanor of the crowds that had been brought together indicated a Methodist conference rather than a political convention, it was that the issues had a seriousness of purpose and vital consequences second only to religion itself. A glance at the convention showed it to be composed largely of younger men, whose independence, energy and ability had marked them as exponents of the great moral and political movement that had convulsed the North. Prominent as leaders in the organization were a due proportion of veterans who had done eminent service under the banners of the old parties.

All had been drawn together by a great purpose and were entirely possessed with one idea. Though drawn from antagonistic parties, where many of them had met each other in political controversy, they brought with them no animosities to be placated, factions to be conciliated or issues to be compromised. The work before them was plain and simple. It was only to organize the willing forces and define the mode of attack. The plan of campaign of the opposition had been distinctly outlined by the Democratic convention which met at Cincinnati two weeks previously and which had unreservedly sanctioned all the demands of the slave power in their most odious form. Its issues were accepted fully and boldly, without reservation, equivocation or concealment.

Kansas was made the ward of the Republican party, and was specially

recognized by a resolution in the platform declaring "that Kansas should be immediately admitted as a state of the Union, with her present free constitution, as at once the most effectual way of securing to her citizens the enjoyment of the rights and privileges to which they are entitled and of ending the civil strife now raging in her territory."

It is one of my most pleasing memories to have been connected, though merely as a delegate, with this first step in a grand political movement, and to have been associated with men who found in the convention an entrance to a higher sphere, and as champions of the issues there made rising to national fame. From this opportunity the most notable to rise to distinction were Lincoln and Blaine, Owen Lovejoy and John M. Palmer, E. Rockwood Hoar and Charles Francis Adams. Scores of the other delegates later came into prominence.

The territories having no vote in the election of President, had not heretofore been given a voice in the nomination. But as Kansas had been chosen as the watchword and was to furnish the keynote of the campaign, it was fitting that her delegates should be admitted to vote and but natural that they should be received with overwhelming demonstrations of welcome. The delegation consisted of S. C. Pomeroy, C. H. Branscomb, M. F. Conway, S. W. Eldridge, James M. Winchell, S. N. Wood and R. G. Elliott.<sup>37</sup> Kansas was not only the watchword, it was also the password that admitted those who could give it to seats in the crowded hall with the regular delegation.

The convention had come together with full freedom of choice, as becomes a deliberative body; but few, if any, of its members had instructions as to candidates, yet they were not without their openly expressed preferences. Seward and Chase were most commonly mentioned for the honor of leadership, but there was no concerted movement for the nomination of either; a fact that Blaine has accounted for in his "Twenty Years of Congress"—that they both considered their political fortunes likely to be hindered rather than advanced by a "nomination where election was regarded as improbable." With deeper insight than the enthusiastic rank and file of the new party, they foresaw that the impending conflict would be preliminary, to develop the strength of the enemy and determine the lines for a future decisive battle.

Yet there were other motives that determined the choice of the convention. While established parties naturally choose their standard bearers from among the tried leaders of a political movement, a party springing from the disintegration of older ones, with all the buoyancy of youth and the conscious strength of maturity, bound neither by traditions nor former ties, is prone to make its own precedents and to give wide latitude to its freedom of choice, often selecting a leader free from political trammels. It will naturally be attracted to the one possessing most conspicuously the progressive traits of its own organization.

In the estimate of the convention, such a candidate was Col. John C.

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37. There were nine delegates from Kansas, but unfortunately their names do not appear in the proceedings of the convention published in the *New York Tribune*, June 18-20, 1856. On both the informal and the formal ballots for President Kansas voted solidly for Fremont, giving him nine votes. On the informal ballot for Vice President Kansas cast eight votes for S. C. Pomeroy and one vote for Cassius M. Clay, but on the formal ballot cast the entire vote for William L. Dayton, of New Jersey.

Fremont. Though a native of Georgia, and of southern affiliations, he disowned slavery and opposed its extension and its aggressions. His daring service in gaining military possession of California for the United States had placed his name among the patriots of the Mexican War. His contributions both to science and to popular knowledge by his explorations of the vast unknown interior of the continent were widely acknowledged and appreciated. His perilous wandering through the wide unexplored wilderness of mountains in search of a passage for civilization in its westward course had aroused universal admiration, and the story as written by him was yet fresh in the public mind and formed a classic of noble adventure. The romance attending his marriage to the beautiful daughter of Senator Benton, her devotion to him and his undertakings, added that coloring of sentiment that appeals so effectually to the strongest instincts of the heart. And happily his very name lent itself to the cadence of a motto expressing the whole aspiration of the new party—aspirations to which it was felt his election would give vitality—"Free soil; free labor; free speech; Fremont."

Unhampered by political entanglements, there was wanting only an assurance of his sympathy with the moral uprising of the North to make him an ideal standard bearer of the new party. This assurance was given in a letter to Governor Robinson in reply to one from him, recalling a proslavery contest in California, in which the governor, then a member of the legislature, had supported Fremont for United States senator.

His candidacy was not of his own seeking, but had been launched more by suggestion than by authority, and so far as known had its origin with the venerable Francis P. Blair, of the *Washington Globe*, who had been a strong supporter of Benton and an admirer of Fremont. Blair had procured copies of the Fremont letter and had sent them to leading papers in the North. The one received in Kansas was indorsed by N. P. Banks, speaker of the house of representatives, as "containing sentiments worthy of wider circulation." The letter having been called out by one from Governor Robinson, it was evident that the intention of Banks was to have the initial step in the movement taken by Kansas, and thus link the name of Fremont with the cause that was uppermost in the public mind. The suggestion was accepted and the letter was published in the *Kansas Free State*, with the banner, "John C. Fremont for President of the United States," displayed at the head of its columns. It was this issue that was at press when the printing office was destroyed, and the half-printed copies were put into circulation by the winds.

In the convention the result was determined by the first ballot, and was made unanimous amidst intense excitement. W. L. Dayton was nominated for Vice President; his chief competitor, Abraham Lincoln, then first introduced to national consideration, receiving 110 votes.

Throughout the East the political movement had been a revolution; throughout the West it was a resurrection. This was fittingly recognized by the choice of Henry S. Lane, of Indiana, for president of the convention. He had been prominent as a leader of the Whig party and had enjoyed a fame reaching somewhat beyond the bounds of his own state. He was of a type afterward made famous by Lincoln—somewhat shorter in stature, less prominent and angular of features, and if less

wanting in grace of manner, like him in his attitudes; and though with less breadth of grasp and depth of penetration, like him skilled in the art of pointing his arguments with quaint allusions and livening up the solemn gravity of his weightier utterances with keen shafts of wit.

His introduction to the convention, when escorted to the chair, awakened an expression of quizzical anticipation plainly visible among the delegates, that bespoke amusement at the expense of western manners. But on advancing to the front of the platform and presenting with reverent earnestness the great issue that was convulsing the nation, he touched the tenderest chords of patriotism, and in a few sentences, charged with quaint wit and happy allusions, so aroused the enthusiasm and won the admiration of the audience, that he controlled the convention more by his presence than by command. And after the organization, removing his chair to the end of the table and crossing his legs, with outstretched hand resting upon his cane, he gave himself up to enjoyment of the oratory with which the convention was overflowing, accentuating applause by tapping his cane upon the platform.

His address, with the natural abandon of his manner, so commended him to his audience that he received more calls to address large meetings in the East than he could accept. He was afterward elected United States senator, serving with distinction during the War of the Rebellion.

While in the East I visited Governor Reeder at his home in Easton, Pa., commissioned by the Boston committee to arrange with him for a conference and the delivery of an address in that city. I found him in a spacious home in the midst of his family, with a large circle of friends, and the town alive with preparations for a grand reception to be tendered him. He had just reached there from his escape from Kansas, having passed over a circuitous route and been detained by assemblages that beset him at every available point. The whole town seemed to have turned out, and with bands of music, banners, processions and an address of welcome honored him more as a conquering hero than an escaped fugitive. The governor received the demonstration from the balcony of the hotel, and responded in an address which presented the cause of Kansas and his indictment of the administration with a force and effect that only the experience through which he had passed, and the sympathy of his audience, could call out.

On calling upon him he proposed introducing me to his wife, an attention which she promptly declined to receive, declaring that she needed no introduction, as she was "already well acquainted with Colonel Eldridge through what he had done for her husband." She then pressed me to permit my baggage to be brought from the hotel and to make their house my home as long as I should remain.

A little incident that occurred on this occasion will show the cordiality and homeliness of his welcome. After supper cigars were brought. Taking one, I was moving towards the door to enjoy it outside, when he suddenly checked me, and leading the way into the richly furnished parlor, introduced me to some half dozen ladies who had called to spend the evening with the family. Proffering a seat beside himself, he lit his cigar and offered me a light, with the remark, "This is good enough for me." Then we proceeded to enjoy our smoke.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MIGRATION BY THE IOWA ROUTE.

THE free-state migration to Kansas by river had been effectually blocked. Companies of northern emigrants had been disarmed, robbed and sent back. The land routes across the northern portion of Missouri were made perilous by patrols at the ferries leading to Kansas. This situation forced emigrants to band together and seek a circuitous route through Iowa and Nebraska, entering Kansas from its northern border at a safe distance from Missouri.

A number of such companies were now on their way over this route. Some of them were stranded for lack of provisions and hesitated to proceed until reinforced, for fear of being intercepted by the border ruffian, General Richardson, who had been charged with watching that corner of the territory.

To more thoroughly organize and strengthen this movement, to assist emigration and to sustain and protect the free-state settlers in Kansas, and especially to "systemize the raising of funds to prosecute this work," a convention met in Buffalo on the 9th of July, 1856, composed of delegates representing Kansas leagues and committees in thirteen northern states.

This convention was the outcome of the movement inaugurated at the great Chicago assemblage, seconded by that addressed by Governor Reeder the following night at Bloomington, and again at Detroit, and followed by numerous other meetings that burst into flame from the report of the sacking of Lawrence. The impulse then aroused throughout the North began to shape a purpose to send relief and reinforcements to the beleaguered free-state men of Kansas. It was designed to consolidate and strengthen the independent movements that were springing up over the country, especially in the West, which, by its proximity and wider relations of population, offered the more prolific field for enlistments.

After earnest deliberation, the convention committed the whole charge of this matter to a national committee, consisting of the following-named persons: G. R. Russell, of Boston; W. H. Russell, of Connecticut; Thaddeus Hyatt, of New York; Neville B. Craig, of Pennsylvania; John W. Wright, of Indiana; Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois; E. B. Ward, of Michigan; J. H. Tweedy, of Wisconsin; Governor W. W. Hoppin, of Rhode Island; W. H. Stanley, of Ohio; F. A. Hunt, of Missouri; S. W. Eldridge, of Kansas; G. W. Dole, H. B. Hurd, J. Young Scammon, J. D. Webster and J. N. Fernold, all of Chicago, with A. H. Reeder as member at large.<sup>38</sup> Chicago was chosen as the business headquarters of the

38. There were evidently many different men serving on the national Kansas committee during its existence, and it has been impossible to get the names of all. A list published as a footnote in volume 8, page 304, "Kansas Historical Collections," varies somewhat from the list given by Mr. Eldridge. And verso of the cover of a little book used by

movement, and the Chicago members were authorized to act as an executive quorum of this committee.

During the session of the convention a dispatch was received from General Lane asking relief and reinforcements for his pioneer company, reported as 250 men. It was the advance guard of the movement and had gone into camp at Nebraska City, halted by the reports that a hostile force would dispute its crossing of the border. General Richardson, in command of the militia in the northeastern district of the territory, had been charged with the defense of the northern border.

General Persifer F. Smith, on assuming command of the Department of the West, records that: "On the 28th of June, at Iowa City, Colonel Lane raised \$2,000 by subscription, and had about 250 men, whom he said he would march, with a large reinforcement from Chicago, across Iowa to Council Bluffs." On July 26 General Smith writes: ". . . There have been no disturbances, but emigrants are coming in armed, as though they were prepared to begin again when the opportunity offers." August 1 he writes Col. S. Cooper, adjutant general of the army: "Judge Lecompte . . . had heard that a party of men who had come from Iowa with Lane had threatened to prevent his holding court in Doniphan county . . ." And he had, at the request of Judge Lecompte, detached Capt. T. J. Wood with a company of the First cavalry to act under the judge's authority. Reports now came flying like autumn leaves. And a few days later General Smith again wrote Col. Cooper: "Some of the companies along the Kansas were sent by the commanding officer there, at the governor's request, to break up camps of armed men at several places he designated. On the arrival of the troops at the points designated, not only were no camps found, but none had ever existed there or anywhere else in their neighborhood. . . ." At the beginning of this letter he stated that he had received a letter from Governor Shannon, asking him to take the field with the whole disposable force in the territory, to prevent the ingress of "Lane's party" by the northern boundary—a request that he declined to comply with, awaiting the report from Captain Wood, then patrolling the northern frontier.<sup>39</sup>

It was this condition of startled and haunted watchfulness on the part of the territorial authorities and the threatening military movements that

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the school-district canvassers in aid of the free-state cause in Kansas in 1856, and given this Society by Eli Thayer, appears the following:

"A national convention of the friends of freedom in Kansas was held at Buffalo, July 9, at which thirteen states were represented by delegates.

"A national committee has been chosen, consisting of the following gentlemen: Thaddeus Hyatt, president, of New York City, now residing at Chicago; Capt. J. D. Webster, vice president, Chicago, Ill.; H. B. Hurd, secretary, Chicago, Ill.; Geo. W. Dole, treasurer, Chicago, Ill.; Dr. S. G. Howe, general financial agent, of Boston, now residing at Chicago, Ill.; W. F. M. Army, general transportation agent, of Bloomington, now residing at Chicago, Ill.; Dr. Samuel Cabot, jr., Boston, Mass.; William H. Russell, New Haven, Conn.; Gov. W. H. Hoppin, Providence, R. I.; Alexander Gordon, Pennsylvania; John W. Wright, Logansport, Ind.; Abraham Lincoln, Springfield, Ill.; S. S. Barnard, Michigan; J. H. Tweedy, Milwaukee, Wis.; W. H. Stanley, Cleveland, Ohio; F. A. Hunt, St. Louis Mo.; W. Penn Clark, Iowa City, Iowa; A. H. Reeder, Kansas; S. W. Eldridge, Kansas; J. Y. Scammon, Chicago, Ill.

"Office: No. 11, Marine Bank Building, corner of Lake and La Salle streets, Chicago, Ill."

39. For the above correspondence of General Smith see "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 4, p. 457, *et seq.*



brought the advance guard of the northern armed emigration to a halt at Nebraska City.

The practical initiative of the movement through Iowa, which has been permitted to lapse into obscurity, to the depreciation of its importance, is set forth in the following circular:

*To the Friends of Free Kansas:*

"The undersigned, IOWA STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, for the benefit of FREE KANSAS, beg leave to represent that the dangers and difficulties of sending Emigrants to Kansas through Missouri has been attempted to be remedied by opening through Iowa an Overland Route. At present Iowa City, the Capital of Iowa, is the most western point that can be reached by Railroad. Arrangements are being made by Gen. LANE, Gov. REEDER, Gen. POMEROY, Gov. ROBERTS, and others to turn the tide of emigration in this channel, and thus avoid the difficulties heretofore experienced in attempting to pass through Missouri.

"It is proposed to take the following course through Iowa:

"Leaving Iowa City, proceed to Sigourney, thence to Oskaloosa, thence to Knoxville, thence to Indianola, thence to Osceola, thence to Sidney, and to Quincy<sup>40</sup> in Fremont county, Iowa, on the Missouri River, 80 miles from Topeka, the Capital of Kansas. An Agent has been through the State by this route, and the citizens in each of the aforesaid Towns have appointed active committees. The inhabitants of this line will do all in their power to assist Emigrants. The distance from Iowa City to Sidney on the Missouri River is 300 miles, and the cost of conveying passengers will be about \$25. The "Western Stage Company" have formed a new line of coaches, and will put on all the stock necessary for the accommodation of every Emigrant who may come. This can positively be relied on. You will at once see that this must be a general and concerted effort, or the project will fail, and each body of Emigrants will be left to their own guidance.

"We wish also to call attention to the impracticability of Committees far in the East sending men, as any number can be raised in the West, and thus save an additional expenditure. All that is wanted is the *means* of defraying expenses. It is hoped, therefore, that our friends will lend us their aid in this particular, and assist us in raising money. We would suggest that Committees in the East send an Agent here for the disbursement of their funds, if they are unwilling to entrust the same to this Committee. Our citizens have just raised the means to fit out a Company of 230 men which has this day started for Kansas. Another Company as large can be raised as soon as means can be obtained. It is hoped that all companies formed in the East will be sent over this route, and those who desire that Slavery shall not be FORCED in Kansas, should assist us in obtaining *material aid*. As Iowa is more deeply interested than any other State in saving Kansas from the grasp of the Slave power and in the success of the proposed project, the people of this State are urgently requested to organize Committees and contribute to the prosecution of this scheme of settling Kansas with FREE-STATE men; and all funds raised for this object should be transmitted at once to H. D. Downey, of the Banking House of Cook, Sargent & Downey, the Treasurer of this Committee, with the confident assurance that all monies thus placed in our hands will be faithfully applied to the cause of our suffering friends in Kansas.

"W. PENN CLARK, *Chairman*.

"G. W. HOBART, *Secretary*.

"H. D. DOWNEY, *Treasurer*.

"W. PENN CLARK, E. W. HOBART, L. ALLEN, JESSE BOWEN, M. L. MORRIS, G. D. WOODIN, J. N. JEROME, J. TEESDALE, *Kansas Central Committee of Iowa*.

"Iowa City, July 4, 1856."

40. There is evidently a typographical error in this circular, as Quincy is in what is now Adams county, and is some fifty or sixty miles northeast of Sidney. This latter town is the county seat of Fremont county, and lies about twelve miles from the Missouri river.

It was also learned that there were other companies on the Iowa route, some of them reported in a badly disorganized and helpless condition. Notably, at Iowa City was a company of about one hundred men from Chicago, part of them from the company that had been disarmed on the Missouri river and turned back. They were making a second attempt to reach Kansas. This company, though well equipped with transportation, arms and provisions, had become demoralized through a wrangle over their organization. On consultation it was decided by the convention that the success of the movement required that all of these fragmentary and independent companies<sup>41</sup> should be gathered into one command and their conduct placed under a responsible head. Accordingly the committee decided to commission a special agent to take charge of this whole business, and Governor Reeder—evidently as a recognition of the services rendered in his escape from Kansas—nominated me for that position. As my family were still shut up in Kansas City, and fearing that they were likely to be held as hostages for my conduct, I urgently declined the position, but was finally compelled to yield to the pressure of the committee, and set out at once on my mission.

The trip from Buffalo to Chicago was by steamer, with sumptuous accommodations that contrasted greatly with the fare on the latter end of my route. In entering upon my duties my first business relations were with the Chicago quorum of the committee, G. W. Dole, J. D. Webster, H. B. Hurd, J. Young Scammon, and J. D. Ferrolld,<sup>42</sup> names that I have always desired to hold in remembrance as a band of patriotic, generous and affable men, willing and ready to contribute of their own means and supply every demand made upon them to the extent of their resources in the cause of Kansas, to which they were enthusiastically devoted. In all my intercourse with business men I have never met with more generous, trustful, cordial and considerate treatment than that uniformly accorded me by these men.

Having been supplied with the necessary funds by the committee, I took the cars for Iowa City, then the western terminus of railroad communication. There I bought a horse and rode out some three or four miles to visit the first encampment of emigrants.

The troubles in this company I found to be due to jealousy growing out of the choice of officers. The origin of the company is here given, condensed from a published account by S. S. Prouty,<sup>43</sup> one of its members, afterward well known throughout Kansas as editor, county officer and state printer. A party of about seventy-five had been organized in

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41. For material regarding the make-up of these companies, the names of conductors, points of organization, etc., see "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 8, p. 308, *et seq.*, text and footnote. While some things have been written about the party to come through Iowa to Kansas, known as "Lane's army of the North," no general story has yet been told. There is abundant material to be found on the subject. The letters of Hyatt and others connected with the national Kansas Committee; the Webb scrapbooks; the executive minutes of Gov. John W. Geary, published in "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 4; scattering stories of different members of this emigration movement published in various volumes of the "Historical Collections" and in the Andreas "History of Kansas," all form primary and secondary sources from which a valuable paper on this little-known phase of Kansas history could be compiled.

42. This name appears as J. N. Fernold, I. N. Arnold and J. D. Ferrolld. So far it has been impossible to verify it.

43. Mr. Prouty did not come to Kansas with the first party through Iowa and Nebraska, but followed with the second party, reaching Kansas early in October.

Illinois early in the season, and in passing up the Missouri had been disarmed at Lexington and their arms confiscated by Gen. Joe Shelby—later of confederate fame. At Leavenworth, they were robbed of provisions, camp and garrison equipage, and agricultural implements; then taken up to Weston and detained as prisoners for two days waiting for the boat, *Star of the West*, to begin the return trip, on which they were escorted down the river and unceremoniously landed on the Illinois shore in a destitute condition. The robbery at Leavenworth and the detention at Weston were under the leadership of D. R. Atchison and B. F. Stringfellow. The members of this company who were not disheartened by the experience, reinforced by others, made a second attempt to reach Kansas by way of Iowa, and went on to Iowa City.

To settle the disputes that were demoralizing the company I presented my commission from the national committee, authorizing me to take charge of them. As might be expected from such a collection of elements, they hesitated to surrender their independence and proposed to submit the matter to a vote. I replied:

"No, we do not want any such vote. We want no one to go except of his own free will. We will settle this by one test. All of you that desire to go with me to Kansas step out on my right; those of you that do not, remain where you are."

Only two remained. Then giving an order for all to be ready to move promptly by six o'clock on the following morning, I returned to Iowa City to complete my preparations for the march.

The set time found us ready to move, buoyant and harmonious. The company was well equipped and furnished with tents and with good teams and wagons to carry the baggage and stores. Thus well outfitted and impatient from the season of waiting, we were able to make a satisfactory record in our marches. Expecting to gather in other parties on the route with their respective leaders, a subordinate was seen to be necessary. A member named James A. Harvey, whom I had observed as showing the proper qualifications, was proposed and accepted, receiving his commission as captain. He afterward figured prominently in the armed conflicts in Kansas, gaining the title of colonel in the army of defense and leading in the expedition against Hickory Point, where he was captured, with his command, by the United States troops and held through the summer as a prisoner at Leecompton. The monotony of our journey was frequently relieved by a parade, led by music and banners.

The route was located by the pioneer party that set out from Iowa City July 4 and was now waiting at Nebraska City. It led southwestward till it reached the second tier of counties from the Missouri line, thence westward to Tabor, a town on the northern line of Fremont, the extreme southwesterly county of Iowa, within convenient distance of Nebraska City. Tabor was settled by a people of decided antislavery principles, and so, with strong and active sympathy toward this northern movement, it became at once the point for concentrating emigration. There parties were outfitted for the final march through the corner of Nebraska into Kansas. Later it became a retreat for those who were proscribed by

the proclamation of Governor Geary, as well as a resting place for John Brown with his bands of rescued slaves.

Later in the season, on the extension of the Burlington railroad to Mount Pleasant, that town became the starting point, giving a due west course over the whole route.

After some six or eight days' march we overtook a company led by Dr. Calvin M. Cutter, distinguished as the author of a "Physiology," widely used as a textbook in the schools, and later prominent in the medical department of the army during the War of the Rebellion. This company had been raised and equipped in the East, largely through the efforts of Hon. Eli Thayer, and was well supplied with transportation, but it was drawn by ox teams, which accounted for our overtaking it, and in keeping it company, shortened our daily marches. As the company readily accepted our leadership, it was supplied with such stores as were found to be needed.

The tediousness of the long march from Iowa City to Tabor was greatly relieved by the marked kindness and hospitality and the ready willingness to supply all the wants of our journey shown by the settlers along the way. Only at Osceola, a town near the middle of the route, was there any hostile disposition shown us, and that not by the community, but by an element, the outgrowth of slavery, that had found its way across the border and was tolerated more because of its feeble-mindedness than respected from any sense of liberty.

Mrs. Cutter, who accompanied her husband, had made an appointment to address a meeting on the great issues of the time from a woman's standpoint. Now "woman's right to meddle in politics," according to the creed of this weak-minded element, so conflicted with the nature of things that its public assertion by a woman overcame the boasted southern deference to the sex and justified indignities.

The representative of the class in Osceola was a burly blacksmith, who threatened to break up the meeting and prevent Mrs. Cutter from being heard. The plot coming to the knowledge of the camp, the boys seized upon it as offering a job that came strictly within their line of business, and quickly devised a counterplot. The meeting no sooner opened than the blacksmith, who had taken a conspicuous position, broke out with an interruption—the signal for a riot. I had taken a place near him and was watching his movements. Upon his interjection I instantly seized him with a firm grip and called for the enforcement of order. The boys, who had been distributed through the crowd, instantly rose in such force as to command implicit obedience. At the same time the leader was snatched from my grasp and compelled to play anvil to the sledge-hammer fists of the boys till they had forged him into a quiet listener to a "woman meddling with politics."

The next party overtaken was that of Capt. Henry J. Shombre, from Indiana, composed of some fifty men. Captain Shombre was destined to a brief but brave and gallant career, falling mortally wounded within a few days after his arrival in Kansas in an attack on Fort Titus, near Leecompton, in which his company was engaged.

Further on the route we came up and connected with a party enlisted

in Wisconsin, well furnished and fitted out with wagons in the most comfortable style for travel, organized by the brothers W. W. and E. G. Ross. With their equipment for defense this party showed more the characteristics of determined, permanent and substantial settlers than was apparent among the other companies. E. G. Ross was a practical printer, and with his brother established a printing office in Topeka and for some years published the *State Record*. He became a distinguished citizen of the state and served as major of the Eleventh Kansas during the War of the Rebellion, and as United States senator. Later he was governor of New Mexico. A company under a Capt. Elza Lindsey was the last to be gathered in before reaching Nebraska City.

Arriving at Tabor July 25, we were rejoiced to meet Dr. S. G. Howe, of Boston, and Thaddeus Hyatt, of New York, members of the national committee who had been sent out to supervise affairs. They were accompanied by E. B. Whitman and A. D. Searle, whose experience with the South Carolinians and escape from Kansas City has already been related. The committee had selected Mount Pleasant as the new starting point of the overland route and had placed brother Thomas there in charge as agent, forwarding emigrants and supplies. Therefore, the choice of Tabor as a final point of rendezvous was especially fitting, being alike sufficiently near the crossing of the Missouri and distant from threatened border raids. For the sympathy and ready helpfulness of its people in supplying the needs of the forces marching to the relief of the besieged free-state men, Kansas will ever owe Tabor a debt of gratitude.

On the 29th of July, while the companies were being refitted, in company with Doctor Howe, Mr. Hyatt and some others, I crossed over to Nebraska City and visited the Chicago company, as it was called, which had been enlisted and conducted so far by General Lane. We found it encamped a short distance out in the country, where it had been impatiently waiting for supplies and reinforcements, and in a destitute and demoralized condition. With Lane we found General Pomeroy and T. W. Higginson, who has since become famous as an author. Here it was divulged that the special mission of Howe and Hyatt was to change, at least in outward semblance, the character of the movement.

## CHAPTER XII.

### MIGRATION BY THE IOWA ROUTE—CONCLUDED.

THE PROPOSITION for an armed and organized emigration grew out of the perilous situation in which the free-state settlers of Kansas found themselves in the winter of 1855-6. The disturbed condition of the territory had checked the natural flow of immigration during the season of 1855. The invading mob of 1,800, under Sheriff Jones, marshaled for the destruction of Lawrence, but foiled by an equivocal treaty and dispersed by a December snowstorm, indicated the method determined upon for the suppression of the free-state cause and the magnitude of the force under command for its execution. Throughout the winter advices from Missouri gave warning of preparation for a more effective invasion. Atchison and Stringfellow had flooded the South with an urgent appeal for help, that had met with a ready response in the enlistment of the "Buford men."

With a knowledge of the impending crisis, the executive committee of Kansas territory had sent to the Northern states a commission consisting of J. S. Emery, M. F. Conway, Judge George W. Smith and Morris Hunt, to present their dangerous and defenseless situation, and as Robinson, who had just been elected governor under the Topeka constitution, expressed it in a letter to Amos A. Lawrence, January 25, 1856, "to raise an army for the defense of Kansas and the Union." Volunteer auxiliaries to this commission were S. N. Wood and S. C. Smith, who had been parties to the rescue of Branson, and by advice had left the territory to avoid complications with the territorial authorities. Smith and Wood had found their way through Missouri incognito by unaccustomed routes, and were doing effective work; Smith in the East, and Wood in his native state of Ohio. As to the commission, the trip across the state of Missouri, aroused to watchfulness, had been a more difficult undertaking.

A succession of drifting snowstorms, beginning on the 20th of December, of unusual depth, accompanied with cold of intense severity, had made the roads impassable except by excavation at every depression, and had stopped all public conveyances. Mails west of Jefferson City, the terminus of the railroad, had ceased. So complete was the embargo that for six weeks no communication reached Lawrence from east of Independence. To avoid the gantlet of the thickly beset route that lay due eastward, the commission had selected the least used one, crossing north Missouri. They concealed their credentials in a jug, that on account of its supposed contents passed unchallenged as a proslavery badge, and satisfying all curious cross-questions with hints about land speculation in connection with the Hannibal & St. Joe Railroad, then under construction, they crossed the Mississippi at Quincy afoot on the ice. In the middle of the stream the jug was broken and each man reclaimed his credentials.

This commission, with the auxiliary forces of the press, the pulpit, and organizations that sprang up everywhere throughout the North, aroused the public to activity, and even moved the legislatures of the more sympathetic states to take such action as they could constitutionally to aid the beleaguèred pioneers of Kansas.

The first material response to the appeal was a company of seventy-nine, under the conduct of C. B. Lines, enlisted in New Haven, Conn., and supplied with Bibles and armed with Sharps rifles by a public meeting in which Henry Ward Beecher was a moving spirit. It was this company that founded Wabaunsee. A larger company, recruited in Ohio, was brought in by S. N. Wood, provided, as reported by him, with some "twenty boxes of muskets borrowed from the Ohio militia." Besides the equipment of these volunteers, a consignment of Sharps rifles valued at \$4,000 was forwarded from the East by officers of the Emigrant Aid Company, but was confiscated by the forces that patrolled the Missouri river.

Despite this organized assistance and the natural flow of immigration which set in briskly with returning spring, affairs assumed a more threatening attitude. Reports from the extreme South, exultantly proclaimed by the border press, revealed there a jealous activity in forestalling the more deliberate movement at the North. The vengeful and implacable spirit inbred by slavery, called up by the appeal of Atchison and Stringfellow, was materializing in the enlistment of bands of boastful adventurers—young men committed by their organization to a campaign of destructive hostility against the adherents of freedom in Kansas.

The independent state government under the constitution framed at Topeka, with officers and legislature elected under it in January, was inaugurated on the 4th of March. The legislature, appointing a committee to frame a code of laws necessary to put the state government into effective operation, adjourned to meet at Topeka on the 4th of July.

Now the constitution in its adoption was by the mass of its adherents regarded as petitionary and in harmony with the provisions of the organic act, though not expressly authorized by an enabling act of Congress. Its executive, however, with most of the officers elected under it, held that it derived its authority directly from the people and might lawfully call out military force in defense of the exercise of its powers against the assaults of the territorial government.

But by the opposition this state movement had been regarded from its inception as treasonable, and the attempt to put it into operation as insurrectionary, justifying the use of military force for its suppression.

With the advance of spring unmistakable signs were abundant that a crushing assault was planned to be made against the advocates of freedom on these lines. The plot had fully developed during the session of the congressional committee in Lawrence. To meet these conditions more energetic and positive methods were demanded. What counsel was had and what method determined upon is best told by Governor Reeder, who had been elected United States senator under this constitution. In his diary, under date of May 7, 1856, he records:

" . . . Governor Robinson and Lieutenant Governor Roberts and myself had a consultation, and all came to the same conclusion—that the

plans of the enemy were well laid; that if we allowed them to pick up all our leaders, including all the state officers, members of the legislature, etc., for an offense not bailable, and keep them shut up for six months and until after the next election (as they could), that they would then take our people in detail and break them down, especially as they had provided for a parade and training of the militia on election day, and under cover of this would introduce, without doubt, a number of men from Missouri. The prospect was dark, the crisis an important one and involving grave consequences, and yet we had but brief time to consult. Resolved that we must soon make an open, organized armed resistance, and that to make it as effectual and justifiable as it is already righteous and just, we must do it under and through the forms of the state government, and thus set up the state against the territorial government. For this we must call the legislature together, pass laws, organize courts, organize and officer our militia, and supply them all with arms who are not already supplied; that as soon as our courts are organized we must issue writs of habeas corpus and take their prisoners away from them, and thus make the issue of force and blood in the best shape we can. Codifying committees are already at work and some of the laws will soon be ready. The legislature must be called by the — day of June, as on that day commences the next court in the Second district, when they will all be indicted and arrested. It is agreed also that some one shall go East to raise men and arms to prepare for this emergency, and for several reasons that Robinson would better go, after issuing his proclamation for the legislature to assemble, leaving Roberts to act in his place. I suggested that I would like to have them try one of their indictments for treason on me, and that perhaps I should better be arrested. All agreed that much capital could be made out of it, but the only difficulty is that it will keep me prisoner till October, when so much is to be done. I persisted, however, that I would submit to the arrest and try it. We did not determine what we would do as a last resort in case the general government took the field against us, and gave us the alternative of backing out or of levying war against them. This would not be the silly sham treason, for which indictments are found now, but actual treason, at least in the letter, although as holy and glorious in spirit as the dawn of the Revolution of '76. Robinson declares that at least we will wipe out the d—d territorial government absolutely and effectually, and to this we all assented."<sup>44</sup>

The execution of this plan was balked by the arrest of Governor Robinson at Lexington on his way east on this military mission, and his confinement at Lecompton under indictment for treason. It was still further delayed by Reeder's being driven into close concealment in Kansas City. Yet there was some compensation in these untoward incidents, as their publication aroused an indignation throughout the North that was given shape by the state officers and others liable to indictment who sought refuge in the states. Lane, who had hitherto been conservative and posed as a Democrat while attempting to engineer the Topeka constitution through Congress, now, burning with indignation at the contemptuous humiliation inflicted upon him by Douglas in the treatment of his petition for the admission of Kansas, denounced his political allies and went flaming through his native state preaching a crusade for the rescue of Governor Robinson.

But definite shape and more systematic method was given to the movement by Governor Reeder on his escape from Kansas City. He

44. See "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 3, p. 206.



also, burning with indignation, on reaching safety in Illinois gave the measure of his wrath in a proposition to raise and equip an army of 10,000 men. In his diary of May 30 he records:

"At Bloomington and Chicago I proposed my plan of help for Kansas, to wit, the raising of 10,000 men and \$200 a man, and to equip and provision them for a year, \$5,000 to be sent on at once, and 5,000 men or more if wanted; they to provision 500 men in Chicago and 500 in the state. Had full consultation with our friends, and among them with Major Jones of a volunteer battalion, who says that if funds are raised he will contribute 300 good men. . . ." <sup>45</sup>

The great Chicago meeting, addressed by both Lane and Reeder, each in his most characteristic manner—Lane with an abandon of dramatic expression, and Reeder with impassioned but dignified utterance—the echoes of which were returned from a hundred sympathetic assemblages in the North, marks the culmination of this movement. The result was the organizing and forwarding of a military force, the first company of which was disarmed on the Missouri river and turned back, and the second now waited at Nebraska City under the command of Lane.

All this occurred before the nomination of Fremont, while public sentiment was in a state of ebullition and without political direction. The "Kansas imbroglio," as it was termed with administrative dignity by the President, had been projected upon the country in its knottiest condition, with such force that it could not be evaded by either political party. In the Democratic camp it fell as a bomb, but was thrown back into the Republican ranks primed with the lighted fuse of incipient insurrection. First in the field, with Buchanan as its candidate, the Democratic party opened its campaign by denouncing the party of freedom as lawless insurgents, pointing to the crusade then in progress as convincing evidence.

The Republicans, coming to the front with their organization some ten days later, with "Free Kansas" as the material point of their contention, and its admission into the Union demanded, as then organized, with the measure declared urgent. The Republican House having passed the bill, found themselves embarrassed by the incongruous attitude of their ward. One foot in the Union, its head in chancery, its body reduced to fragments, and its arms reaching out for deadly weapons to assault a rival.

The Republican House of Representatives had accepted the Topeka constitution as a petitionary measure, and admitted the state as inchoate.

45. Ibid., p. 222. That Governor Reeder's ideas were somewhat modified as to the number of men needed is shown from the following minutes of the "Committee of Six." This manuscript forms part of the Hyatt collection in the possession of the Kansas State Historical Society:

"26th June. Thursday morning, 10 o'clock. Committee met at the office of Edgar Ketchum, Esq., 79 Nassau St. T. McNamee and C. H. Dana absent.

"Governor Reeder, Eli Thayer, of Worcester, and Mr. Repper, of the Albany committee, were present with the committee to advise with reference to distributing the funds. Governor Reeder explained his views substantially as follows, viz.:

"Establish 5,000 armed settlers on the soil of Kansas and provision them for one year. To effect this, organize a fund of \$2,000,000 in the hands of a national central committee with their headquarters at Chicago. Committee to consist of five citizens of Chicago—three of Kansas and one from each state. Each state to be thoroughly organized by the state, county and town organization. All monies collected to be paid into the Chicago treasury, excepting such sums as the various branches might expend in direct efforts for the cause. *No salaried office to exist.* The whole work to be one of unadulterated patriotism."

This is an important document, in that it shows the origin of the national Kansas committee, which, as has been seen, was organized at Buffalo, July 9, 1856.

To recognize it now as of legitimate active vitality, and especially to yield it belligerent rights against an arm of the Federal government, was not only to surrender the issue upon which the party had come into power, but to stretch the doctrine of "squatter sovereignty" to the snapping point. As the belligerent side of the question was that which engrossed public attention, to oppose the military movement, which was approved by the moral if not the political sense of the people, was to destroy the force of the "Kansas issue."

In view of this delicate situation the campaign mapped out by the Republican leaders left the military movement outside their line of defense. Reeder was quietly called down from his war horse, silently accepting the situation; the Kansas political missionaries were instructed against commending the doctrine of popular sovereignty on which they based their constitution, and all were enjoined against any attempt to put the state government into operation. Only Lane, careering through the storm that had been raised, could not be brought under control. But he soon ceased to be a disturbing factor, leaving the platform for the field.

The plan of the movement at the beginning contemplated the massing of an imposing force at Topeka for the defense of the legislature to meet on the 4th of July. But through unavoidable delays in organizing and equipping the companies, with the disarming and turning back of the first one, and the subsequent blockade of the Missouri river, the 4th of July found Lane leading the advance of his expedition out of Iowa City with a month's tedious march before him, and a quorumless legislature dispersed while attempting to organize in the face of Sumner's batteries.

As the special objective purpose of the movement had thus been defeated, and the Democratic party was making a destructive use of it, the Republican managers were compelled by the exigencies of the campaign to interpose and suppress, or at least conceal, the martial features of the movement, which northern sympathizers forbade them to oppose, but which from political policy they dared not indorse.

It was for this reason that the commissioners, Doctor Howe and Thaddeus Hyatt, were dispatched with orders to transfer the command of the expedition from an officer of military prestige, considered as prone to rash adventure, and commit it to one distinguished only as a civilian. Thus the movement was divested of its most striking feature that denoted an insurrectionary expedition, and placed on a defensible basis—an armed emigration for permanent settlement and the relief and defense of the beleaguered citizens of Kansas.

To Lane this sudden and unlooked-for deprivation of command came as a humiliation, which he submitted to only on the order of the commission that no supplies should be issued to any that refused to accept the new order.<sup>46</sup> But as ever, irrepressible, arising from a fit of angry despond-

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46. "It may be regarded as unfortunate that the party were joined in Iowa by the men raised by Colonel Lane, for though his immediate followers were only a fourth of the whole number, yet as he was a man of some notoriety—as he had made his preparations with considerable flourish, as he was, moreover, very active and zealous, and is considered a brave and skillful military leader—he naturally obtained considerable influence over the whole, and the congregated party came to be known to the country as 'Lane's Expedition.' This placed it in a false position before the North, where men were not prepared for

ency in which he threatened suicide, he struck out for Kansas under the name of Capt. Joe Cook, with his staff, and on the arrival of the expedition at Topeka was found with a free hand ready to take command of such force as chose to follow him.<sup>47</sup>

The first few days at Nebraska City were days of busy preparation for the final stage of our march. In ferrying the companies across the Missouri, providing supplies, completing equipments and organizing for the final movement, the time till the 31st of July was fully occupied.

Throughout our march from Nebraska City we had evidence of constant espionage, and on nearing the Kansas line we received visits from Federal army officers who had been set to watch the border, under Capt. T. J. Wood. Our approach had been heralded, producing a commotion in proslavery headquarters at Leecompton. Our numbers had been exaggerated, our equipment magnified and our purposes misconstrued. A peaceful settlement, if let alone, which had now been determined upon, with provision for self-protection, was construed by those who felt themselves deserving of it, into an armed invasion for the infliction of merited retribution. As previously stated, in his alarm at our approach Gover-

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armed and organized emigrations, and gave to its enemies a pretext for calling it a military or *flibustering* expedition. There was the further disadvantage that bands of armed Missourians might come up as a marshal's posse and arrest Lane on the charge of treason and disperse the company under pretext of law; for though the most of the men are fearless of open enemies, they are almost superstitious in their dread of anything in the shape of law. These things were seen by the principal men some time ago, and were admitted by Colonel Lane, who, though naturally very desirous of thrashing the border ruffians, and believing he could thrash them if they were not more than five to one, yet has the cause of Kansas at heart. He was earnestly solicited to remain behind in the states, and finally consented most reluctantly to do so; and the emigrants crossed into Nebraska under the guidance of Mr. Dickie, of Topeka, who had been chosen leader by general consent. Colonel Lane, however, extorted a pledge that if the Missourians should attack the expedition while yet near the frontier of Iowa, a message should be sent instantly to him, that he might join the fray, if it were only as a common soldier."—From the Report of the Buffalo Convention Committee (S. G. Howe and Thaddeus Hyatt) to the National Committee for Aid of Kansas, dated August 11, 1856, and printed in the New York Daily Tribune August 13, 1856. [See, also, Webb Scrapbook, Vol. 16, p. 40.]

47. As this incident has been distorted, and an intense patriotic impulse made the subject of envious personal obloquy amounting to silent disparagement of the whole movement, thereby implying falsely the frittering away of its forces in the supreme crisis, a statement of the affair by Col. Sam Walker, written by Charles S. Glead and published in the "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 6, p. 249, puts the whole matter in its true light, and is here given place.

Colonel Walker states that he was sent for by Governor Robinson, then a prisoner in the United States camp near Leecompton, given \$200 and an order for a horse and saddle, and commissioned to select fifteen men and ascertain General Richardson's position, who was reported to be lying in wait for the incoming northern army. He was also to open communication with General Lane, said to be at Nebraska City—a task that Doctor Root, previously undertaking, had not been able to accomplish.

With his fifteen men Walker was joined at Topeka by Captain Frost and an infantry company of thirty men, who accompanied him to the Nemaha. Diverted here from his route by the story of a Kickapoo Indian, in searching for an encampment of Richardson's militia on the Big Blue he found instead old Captain Brown, his son and son-in-law, and ten others making their way out of the territory by Nebraska. Some of them were wounded. "Cutting loose from the Topeka company, . . . we pushed on with Brown to Nebraska City. . . . Riding all night, we reached our friends about daybreak.

"We found a splendid body of men . . . 50 in number, well armed and equipped. Many of them are now the foremost men in the state. Mr. Howe, of Boston, Colonel Eldridge and Colonel Dickey seemed to be in command. Lane was away in Iowa, keeping out of the hands of the United States marshal, who was after him for bringing armed men into the territory. I told Mr. Howe that if he would push on in our trail he could pass Richardson and join the Topeka company at the Nemaha falls. It was decided that Lane must not accompany the party, as his name might cause trouble with Richardson. A letter was prepared and directed to Lane stating the decision, and I, as a well-known friend of Lane, was appointed to deliver it. Geo. Earle and I left our men at Nebraska City and crossed over to Civil Bend, where Lane was. We found him at Doctor Blanchard's and gave him the letter. After reading it he sat for a long time with his head bowed and the tears running down his cheeks. Finally he looked up and said: 'Walker, if you say the people of Kansas don't want me, it's all right, and I'll blow my brains out. I can never go back

nor Shannon had demanded of Gen. Persifer F. Smith the protection of all the military force at his disposal to prevent the ingress of "Lane's party" by the northern boundary. General Smith, however, with no guilty conscience to make a coward of him, and with judgment to understand the situation, declined to interpose, trusting to the discretion of Captain Wood for due protection of the northern border.

On our approach to the line, a stranger with his wagon and surveyor's outfit approached, and assuring himself of my identity, called me aside, and in an undertone informed me that he was John Brown. He did not wish to be recognized by others, but he offered, with his compass and chain, to "hover around me" for the discovery of any hostile movements. Having no fear of resistance, I declined his services and saw no more of him during the march. Meeting no opposition in entering Kansas, our first camp was at Plymouth, where a portion of the company, concluding to settle, laid out a town site and made preëmption claims. Further on another settlement—Lexington—was made.

Our next stopping place was at Holton, an ideal site for a county town, located in the center of a beautiful country interspersed with timber-skirted streams that in their fan-shaped courses united to form

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to the states and look the people in the face and tell them that as soon as I got these Kansas friends of mine fairly into danger I had to abandon them. I can't do it. No matter what I say in my own defense no one will believe it. I'll blow my brains out and end the thing right here.' 'General,' said I, 'the people of Kansas would rather have you than all the party at Nebraska City.' I have got fifteen good boys that are my own. If you will put yourself under my orders I'll take you through all right.' He assented, and Doctor Blanchard set to work to disguise him. . . . We agreed that I should go back to Nebraska City and get my men, while Doctor Blanchard pulled Lane across the river in a canoe.

"Lane and my little company reached the place appointed for meeting about the same time. He was readily recognized, and the boys, who did not know he was coming, nearly went wild over him. We found some emigrants twelve miles south of the city and encamped near them. Here I received a message from Lawrence urging me to return as soon as possible. I told Lane the news, and he said we must get down there by the next night. The streams were full and no fords. Lawrence was 150 miles away. Lane rode that distance in thirty hours; the rest of us had to give it up.

"Our party now consisted of about thirty persons, we having been joined by old Captain Brown and his men. The captain left his wounded in a place of safety and determined to go back with us. Accordingly we struck out for Lawrence, Lane leading. All that night we pushed on, halting a little just before morning to let the horses graze. The boys threw themselves upon the grass and were soon fast asleep. Brown himself went some distance from the camp, sat down with his back to a tree and his rifle across his knees, and also went to sleep. When Lane got ready to go ahead he directed me to go and awaken Brown. I found the old man asleep, leaning against a tree, as described, and not thinking of danger, I put my hand on his shoulder. Quick as lightning he was on his feet, with his rifle at my breast. I struck up the muzzle of his gun not a second too soon, as the charge passed over my shoulder, burning the cloth of my coat. Thereafter I never approached Brown when he was sleeping, as that seemed to be his most wakeful time.

"About ten o'clock that [the next] night we reached the Kansas river, opposite Topeka, our party having been reduced to six, the others giving out, one by one. We could not cross the river by ferry, as the ferryman lived up in Topeka. The only chance left was to ford. My horse was the only one able to swim across with its rider. The others refused to swim and one was mired in the quicksand. Lane and Charlie Stratton swam over. Going into town we three got something to eat, the first we had since leaving Nebraska City. Lane and Stratton got fresh horses and we started for Lawrence, though it was raining as hard as it could. Before I reached my home I fell off my horse three times from the effects of hunger and fatigue. Each of the three times Lane helped me to my saddle again. On reaching home I could go no further. Stratton continued two miles before he gave up, and Lane went into Lawrence alone, reaching there at three o'clock in the morning.

"When Lane left me at my house he ordered me to go in the morning to Bloomington, collect as many men as I could, establish a camp at Doctor Macey's, on Washington creek, and stay there until I got orders from him to move, no matter what should happen. By night I had collected sixty men, and before morning 200 more came into camp. News was received from Lane that he had captured Franklin and got possession of the old cannon 'Sacramento.' A number of his men had been killed and wounded, but, all things considered, the news was good."

the Grasshopper river. Another portion of the company decided to locate here, lay out a town and avail themselves of the inviting claims along the courses of the numerous streams and on the beautiful rolling uplands.

With Pomeroy, who had joined us at Nebraska City, and myself in advance, another day's journey brought us to the Kansas river, opposite Topeka, on the 11th of August. Here another portion of the company concluded to settle, and, fording the river, left us, in search of homes in that vicinity. The remainder, resuming their march, arrived at Lawrence on the 13th.

Here the expedition was disbanded, the members finding homes as suited them in the town and vicinity. The wagons, horses, cattle and all accouterments of the train furnished by the national Kansas committee were sold at auction and the proceeds turned over to Col. James Blood at Lawrence, who was treasurer of the Kansas central committee. The great portion of transportation, some sixty wagons, was private property under the control of Colonel Dickey, who acted as quartermaster of the expedition. Only that which had been supplied from public funds was sold.

The fact that the expedition was permitted to pass unmolested to its destination under the scrutiny of United States army officers, despite the hostile order of the governor, was due not alone to the change in leadership which divested it of the exaggerated belligerent aspect which had been given it by the war-like propositions of the leaders and the tumultuous indignation that stimulated its enlistment. While the furor of excitement brought to the front a class of adventurers, mature consideration of the situation moved a more substantial people to respond to the cry of distress and gain a right to interpose by acquiring citizenship. Their substantial character may be inferred from their equipment and the large proportion of them distributed on the way and settling upon claims at Plymouth, Lexington, Holton and the vicinity of Topeka. It was this consideration that commended them to Captain Wood.

For this expedition the first public road was opened from Topeka northward through Nebraska. As there existed then only disconnected and indirect trails, a pioneer corps was organized under the direction of Dr. J. P. Root, A. A. and S. V. Jameson, who proceeded in advance to determine the route, constructing all necessary crossings over streams, and making the road passable for teams.<sup>48</sup>

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48. The late E. P. Harris, of Topeka, was a member of a party organized in Worcester, Mass., and conducted by Martin Stowell, which formed one of the groups comprised in the great movement through Iowa. In a statement written many years ago for the Kansas Historical Society, he tells of the travel from Iowa City to Nebraska City. He says: " . . . They moved south of Nebraska City some fifteen miles and went into camp. This at once became a gathering place for parties emigrating to Kansas territory. These came mostly from Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa. . . . Additions to this encampment kept coming, until nearly 600 people (men, women and children) had assembled there. Meantime A. C. Soley, a member of a Worcester (Mass.) company, had been sent to confer with Gen. Persifer F. Smith, then commandant at Fort Leavenworth. Soley was empowered by the emigrants to make two propositions to General Smith in their behalf: one, that he would give them safe conduct into the territory with a company of soldiers, the emigrants to take with them no arms of any description; the other, that he agree to not interfere with these home seekers, but allow them to make their way into the territory as best they could. But the courier's mission was a failure, for General Smith not only refused to have anything to do with either proposition, but was reported to have said to Soley, 'I would hang every one of you d—d abolitionists as high as Haman if I had the say-so in this business.'

"Soley then went to Lawrence and Topeka and reported to some of the leading free-

The arrival of these recruits to the Free-state party was opportune. Lawrence was found to be in a state of siege, the surrounding country overrun by marauding bands. Provisions and means of defense were nearly exhausted; supplies from Leavenworth, the only available source, were obtained at great risk and often at the cost of human life. A blockhouse defended with a cannon at Franklin on the Kansas City road, four miles southeast of town, another called Fort Saunders on Washington creek to the southwest, Colonel Titus's house near Lecompton, portholed and barricaded, were strongholds from which lawless bands from the South sallied out on their marauding excursions, levying tribute and wreaking vengeance on the free-state settlers. The exaggerated rumors of a northern invasion had incited them to renewed activity, and outrages had increased in frequency and atrocity; and, to aggravate the affliction, the Federal troops that should have been used for the protection of the citizens were called into service to hamper the free-state men, while leaving free rein to the marauders. On the Missouri border were reserves, alert and always in readiness to be thrown into Kansas on short call. This was a condition that demanded speedy action to avert abject submission.

The accessions to the defensive forces of the free-state men gave them courage to assume the aggressive. On the night before our arrival, August 12, the blockhouse at Franklin was attacked by a company from Lawrence, and after a fusillade of some hours, with casualties on both sides, it surrendered upon a burning load of hay being backed up to it.

state men the result of his visit to General Smith. It was finally decided to send up three or four Kansas citizens to the Nebraska encampment to pilot the parties down into the territory. On their way up these men marked out a road through the great sea of prairie grass by erecting tall poles at the tops of "divides" (ridges), blazing trees through the timler skirting the creeks, erecting cairns of stones at high places on the prairies, etc. This was the route afterward known as the 'Jim Lane trail.' Under the lead of these men the emigrants proceeded south toward the 'land of promise,' and on the 7th day of August crossed the line into Kansas. Here they were met by a delegation of men prominent in the territory, among the number being old John Brown. On crossing the line great enthusiasm prevailed. The multitude broke out with boisterous shouting and cheers, patriotic songs were sung, congratulations exchanged, and everybody was happy.

"*The proslavery General Smith had been checkmated!*" He had intended to intercept the incoming settlers on what was then known as the 'Brownville road,' over which they were expected to pass. He had a company of dragoons patrolling that road for some time for that purpose. But the route marked out by the free-state men lay many miles to the west of the Brownville road, and was made through the unbroken prairie. Thus the party was able to avoid falling into the hands of the ferocious proslavery general.

"The party crossed from Nebraska into Brown county. Two miles south of the territorial line a party of some seventy-five or eighty men left the main body and surveyed a site for a town. The town was named Plymouth. A dozen miles farther south another company of about seventy-five dropped out from the main party, laid off a town and named it Lexington. This town site, though in Brown county, was not far from where Sabetha, Nemaha county, now stands. In the Lexington crowd was the Martin Stowell company. Still farther on, in what was then Calhoun (now Jackson) county, a third detachment went into camp. They, too, had the townmaking spirit, and chose Holton as its name. The latter is now the county seat of Jackson, and is the only one of the three towns founded by that band of pioneers which still exists.

"The remainder of the great party which on that August morning rolled out of its encampment in Nebraska pursued its way still farther south to Topeka, and here 'scattered out' over the territory.

"Among the members of the Stowell party were Richard J. Hinton (afterward so well known as an author and newspaper writer), James H. Hart, M. F. Hart, Jacob Chase, — Stewart, and E. P. Harris. Hinton died last year [December 20, 1901] in London; M. F. Hart died in 1902, in New York City; Chase died in 1858, in Butler county, Kansas; James H. Hart was living in New York City a few years ago; Harris (the only one of the party who has continuously resided in Kansas since arriving here in 1856) lives in Topeka." [Mr. Harris died September 25, 1916.]

Mr. Harris's statement relative to the sending of a messenger is corroborated in the report of Howe and Hyatt made August 11, 1856. They state that a messenger was sent from the encampment in Nebraska with an "address" asking for an escort of troops. "The trusty messenger should have been back in a week, but nearly two weeks elapsed and he

A good amount of plunder consisting of provisions, guns, ammunition, and a brass six-pounder cannon, the "Old Sacramento," were taken. This was the second attempt at the capture of this most troublesome post. The casualties in the engagement were: Arthur Gunter (afterward city treasurer of Lawrence, and a gallant officer in the War of the Rebellion), dangerously wounded through the lungs; John Brook, wounded in the head; W. D. Wells, wounded in the hand; John G. Crocker and G. W. Smith, jr., slightly wounded.

Next the brigands were driven from their southwest post by the capture of Fort Saunders. This was commanded by a Captain Treadwell, from Tennessee, and was a two-story log blockhouse, some twenty feet square, portholed both above and below and surrounded with earthworks. It was located on open ground on a high bluff and was claimed by army men as capable of being defended by 100 men successfully against 1,000. Here it was that Major David S. Hoyt had been treacherously murdered some two days before, and for its capture a good representation from the recent northern emigrants was called out under the command of Lane, with Colonel Harvey, Doctor Cutter, Capt. H. J. Shombre and Colonel Walker, numbering altogether some 400 or 500 men. By some strategy and imposing maneuvers the Georgian occupants, estimated at some eighty in number, were driven to evacuate the fort after a slight exchange of shots by their pickets. They did not wait to eat their dinner, in preparation, nor did they stand on the order of their going. They left behind them, as Colonel Walker reported, "1,100 Springfield muskets that had never been taken out of their boxes, large quantity of powder and lead, a great number of wagons and horses, flour, bacon, sugar, and coffee; in fact, stores of all kinds"—then badly needed by the free-state men. Of such service was the capture of this stronghold that, in the words of O. P. Kennedy, one of those who took part, "there was practically no more trouble in that part of the country."

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was not heard from. They then dispatched a copy of the address by a second messenger, the Rev. Mr. Stunn, whose return they now await.

"Such was the actual condition of this emigration on the last day of July. They would wait the week out and if no answer came to their application for escort, or if the answer should be unfavorable, then they would march forward and protect themselves as well as they could.

"In order that the character of this emigration may be understood, we subjoin the following memoranda taken on the spot:

"Nebraska Territory, July 30.—Encampment 20 miles S. E. of Nebraska City. The following companies are on the ground, viz.: Milwaukee company, from Wisconsin; Ross, conductor. Fremont Independent company, organized at Iowa City; Dean, conductor. Illinois company, organized at Iowa City; Hankins, conductor. Davenport company, organized at Davenport; Maxhan, conductor. Wisconsin pioneer company, organized at Janesville, reinforced at Iowa City; Hildreth, conductor. Bloomington company, from Bloomington, Ill.; Weed, conductor. Ohio company, from Eaton, Preble county, Ohio; Walker, conductor. Fremont company, organized at Iowa City (branch of the Independent company); Eberhart, conductor. Richmond company, from Richmond, Ind.; Shombre, conductor. Massachusetts company, from Worcester, Mass.; Stowell, conductor. Moline company, from Moline, Ill.; Bell, conductor."

"These made 271 individuals in all. To the above must be added three companies in the rear, whom we met on the following day at the ferry crossing at Nebraska City, viz.: The Massachusetts company of Doctor Cutter, and the Chicago company, together numbering 110, and, with the Rockford company from Illinois, 15 in number, making 125; which, added to the above 271, give a total of 396 souls. We likewise met en route for Kansas several other companies, so that there were probably together on Nebraska soil during the first week in August over 500 emigrants."



Fort Titus was the next and most significant trophy of the newly strengthened free-state forces, and was won by practically the same companies, except that Col. Sam Walker was in command. Lane turned the command over to Walker and set out with a small company for the north, conceiving it to be a military necessity to keep open the line of communication with Iowa by a fortified post on the Nemaha.

Fort Titus, like Saunders, was a portholed log building with the approach defended by a stone fence. An encampment of tents in a grove, situated some three miles southwest from Lecompton, sheltered Major Sedgwick's command of United States troops guarding the treason prisoners at Camp Sackett. This camp was nearly two miles southwest of Fort Titus. An intimation to Walker from the friendly major that he would not interfere without orders, and that if he would be quick about it orders from the governor could not be received in time to prevent him, and a confidential word from a passing stage driver that only fifty or sixty of Titus' 500 men were there in camp, determined Colonel Walker to make an attack by surprise early that morning. With a company detailed to intercept communication between Lecompton and Major Sedgwick, thus delaying interference, the camp was attacked by Walker, driving it under cover. Immediately an impulsive charge was made by the daring Shombre, who fell mortally wounded, with his force repulsed. The "Sacramento," loaded with type-metal balls from the demolished Lawrence printing offices, was now brought up by Captain Bickerton, and after some dozen shots a white flag was hung out and the fort surrendered. The surrender was hastened by a load of hay backed up, with a torch in readiness to apply.

One killed and twenty-one prisoners to grace the triumphal march to Lawrence, chief among them the redoubtable Colonel Titus, badly wounded and bleeding, were the grand prizes of this victory. The spoils, as Colonel Walker has reported, "400 muskets, a large number of knives and pistols, thirteen fine horses, a number of wagons, and a fair stock of provisions." Leaving the fort in flames, the expedition had got well under way when Major Sedgwick, by the order of Shannon, came upon the scene. He excused himself to the governor for not recapturing the prisoners by pointing out the great superiority in numbers of Walker's force. The casualties were found to be: Capt. Henry J. Shombre, mortally wounded, dying next day; Abner W. White, wounded in the arm, necessitating amputation; J. M. Shepherd, George Henry, James N. Velsor, Charles Jordan and George Leonard, all slightly wounded.

As Titus had been notorious for his depredations, it was not without difficulty that he was saved by his captor from the merited vengeance of his former victims. His arrival in Lawrence set the town aflame with excitement, and a demand was made for his execution, that only the strongest appeals to martial honor, coupled with bold threats by Colonel Walker, served to prevent.

While the stirring events of the last few days were transpiring, I accepted the opportunity that they opened for attending to the affairs of my family in Kansas City, which I had been compelled to neglect since leaving them in May. Appreciating the condition in which they were



placed, their surroundings, their unfriendly associations, and the difficulties of communication, it was thought best to remove them to Lawrence, though yet the center of turmoil and danger and greatly lacking in comfortable accommodations.

As my connection with the "Army of the North," which had stirred up such a tumult, made it impracticable for me to go, C. L. Edwards kindly consented to take charge of the matter. He was to assist in packing and shipping their goods and secure passage for them to Lawrence. They arrived safely in the last hacks that passed over the road that season and were housed in a humble cabin in West Lawrence.



MARY SOPHIA ELDRIDGE  
(Mrs. O. E. Leonard).

## CHAPTER XIII.

### MRS. LEARNARD'S STORY.

**T**HE STORY of the family, with the thrilling experiences that they passed through alone amongst a bitterly hostile population, where rumors of blood and conflict, purposely exaggerated, were of daily occurrence, is best told in the following account by Mrs. Mary S. Learnard, who though a mere child, had the events so vividly impressed upon her that she relates them now with all the freshness of events transpiring only yesterday.

"We came to Kansas City, Mo., in November, 1855, remaining there at the Gillis House through the winter. About the first week in May we arrived in Lawrence at the Free State hotel, where we expected to spend five years. We came from Kansas City in ambulances, arriving in Lawrence about four o'clock in the afternoon. Instead of staying in the house a term of five years, we were only permitted to remain about two weeks, when the hotel was destroyed and we were driven out of our home by a band of outlaws who acted under the authority of the government of the United States. This destruction of the town has been named 'the sacking of Lawrence,' and was one of the numerous attempts of the Proslavery party, then dominant, to overawe and suppress the free-state sentiment in the territory. Sheriff Jones, who led the mob, claimed to be acting under an order of the Federal court, based on indictments against the Free State hotel, Governor Robinson's house and other buildings, and the printing presses. The people were powerless to protect themselves, and it would have been treason to offer resistance. The hotel had not been formally opened, but was to have been the following week. The only persons rooming in the hotel, besides the family, were Charles L. Edwards, General Pomeroy and S. N. Simpson.

"The day before the hotel was destroyed a party of us were out for a ride, and this ride left an impression with me which will never be effaced. The country all around was very beautiful and the view from the hill west of town was unsurpassed to our eyes—the lovely wild flowers, many and of infinite variety, such as had never been my delight to see. And on the point of the hill was the foundation for the old Unitarian church, in which in after years I attended school, and which later on became my church home.

"The hotel was built of stone, three stories and basement, with a broad hall running through from east to west. On the right, as one entered, was the reception room; on the left the parlor, handsomely furnished. Just beyond the reception room was the office, and next on the same side were the rooms occupied by the family. The stairs to both upper and lower floors were opposite to our rooms and the office. The dining room was on the southwest in the basement. My memory as to the upper stories is not very clear. I was probably not up there more than once, as I was taken sick the next day after arriving, and for ten days was very ill, being out of the house but once and that was the day before the destruction.

"On the morning of the 21st of May, 1856, as we looked from the west door we saw that the point of Mount Oread was covered with tents, containing Capt. Wm. P. Fain and his posse of between 400 and 500 men. They could not be dignified by the name of soldiers, for they really

looked like the very offscourings of humanity. We hoped, even then, that the hotel would not be disturbed. These invaders had been expected for some time, and I can recall a consultation held between father and mother as to whether it would not be best for mother to take the children and go down to Kansas City on a small boat that happened to be here at that time.

"That mother was a woman of sterling qualities, brave and true! She said, 'We came here to make this our home, and I believe that it is right for us to stay until we are obliged to leave.' And we did stay until we were driven out.

"My father, thinking it good policy, invited the marshal with his officers to take dinner at the house, in order to convince the ruffians that the building was not an arsenal—for they pretended to think it such—but the home of his family, and a place where the weary traveler could find rest and refreshment. He treated them to the best the house afforded, and although the food supplies of the town were rather limited, father had large supplies of everything preparatory to opening the hotel.

"The ruffians accepted the invitation, but it is needless to say that it did not have the desired effect, for in a very short time after the family had had their dinner the little bell boy brought the call bell from the office to the sitting room, struck it as he placed it on the table, saying, 'Your father has been notified that he will have just one hour and forty minutes to move his family and furniture.' (This call bell is now in my possession, having been preserved all these years by Mr. C. L. Edwards.) Imagine our consternation and distress! Although we knew that the destruction of the hotel was a part of the plan of the day, yet we had hoped to save it. My father thought it useless to try to save anything except such articles as could be carried in our trunks. The excitement gave me strength, and I helped dress my sisters, and they were sent over to Mrs. Hoyt's back of the hotel.

"One of the first men to enter the house we recognized as being the same man who came up from St. Louis with us, accompanied by his mother. The boat on which we came to Kansas City brought the furniture and provisions for the hotel, we using part of the furniture to help make us comfortable on the trip, and one of the nicest sofas was unpacked for this old lady's use, and great was our indignation when we saw this man enter our home to destroy it. He said he was very sorry, that they had not understood that it was our home, but he went right on with the destruction just the same. He did offer to carry out some furniture, and mother said she would like to save two pieces, as they came from our old home in Massachusetts. While we were preparing to get out, word was sent in several times that if we did not hurry they would fire. I can now feel the horror of that dreadful hour as I was assisted out of the house and into a waiting ambulance. I presume that the time I sat there waiting for father and mother to come seemed as long to me as it did to those fiends who were waiting so impatiently to commence their work of destruction. Finally they sent word to mother that they would give her just ten minutes longer, and then if she did not come out they would fire anyway. How the villains looked at me! It seems that I can almost see them now, and they looked as if they would like to annihilate me.

"It must have been between four and five o'clock in the afternoon when we were ready, and our trunks, containing what few possessions we could carry, were strapped on the ambulance. We had only gone a short distance, about as far as the Gleason place, when the first shot was fired. That night we drove about twelve miles to the place of a Mr. Fish, a half-breed Indian, where we found accommodations, such as they were, but the best they had to give. I do not remember how the rest of the party got through the night, but I remember about myself. Sleep did not come, and I rolled and tossed on my bed of prairie grass. Everything was

very quiet except for the 'tinkle, tinkle' of a cow bell, and even this slight noise made me exceedingly nervous.

"Morning came at last—a beautiful one—but I fear we did not appreciate it. Father and mother returned to Lawrence, spending the day there. Mother came back with Uncle Thomas Eldridge, but they were delayed on the way and it was about eight o'clock in the evening when they arrived. Father was to stay in Lawrence until the next morning, as he was to be the bearer of important papers to Washington and they were not yet ready. On the way down the carriage was halted by a stranger and my uncle was called off some distance. After a long consultation with the man, who proved to be the correspondent of the New York *Herald* and was known among the free-state men as "Lying Brewerton," he returned safely, much to the relief of my mother, who feared he would be killed. This man told my uncle that the house where we were staying would be burned that night and advised him to start immediately for Kansas City, promising to see us safely through all camps as far as Westport. I did not realize what a trial it would be for mother to go, as she had had arrangements with father to start our carriage in the morning, while she with the other carriage would await father's arrival from Lawrence. We started about nine o'clock and traveled all night, fording streams which we would not at the present day think it possible to pass. One thing favored us—the moon. It was lovely moonlight. We passed a number of camps, and Brewerton would say, 'All right on the goose; let the next carriage pass!'

"After a wearisome and anxious journey we arrived at Kansas City about nine o'clock in the morning. Mother immediately dispatched a horse and buggy with driver to meet father. He was trying to find some way to get to Kansas City when he saw his own team coming. Mrs. William Hutchinson had accompanied father to carry valuable papers for him, and seeing the necessity, and being a brave woman, she went through to Kansas City with him. It was early morning when they reached Kansas City. The day and night preceding had been an anxious one for all concerned. There were several proslavery families in the house where we were staying, and during the day rumors went around that father had been killed. Mother did not believe them, but still to hear such things made her more anxious. When we arrived at the American House in Kansas City, which was kept by father and Uncle Edwin Eldridge, we found our relatives and friends all anxious for their own safety, with all trunks packed and everybody ready to leave. For many weeks, each night when we retired we kept our clothing near at hand, ready to dress and take flight at a moment's notice.

"Father only stayed a day in Kansas City, leaving the hotel and his family in the care of my Uncle Edwin, while he proceeded on his way to Washington with important papers relating to affairs in Kansas. He left on the 24th day of May on his mission to President Pierce. I well remember that my mother was afraid that he might be arrested, but father said, 'I have done nothing for which I should be arrested, and am going on the boat like a man'—and he did. We all walked to the levee with him and he waved us good-bye from the deck. We did not see him again until the 13th day of August. We stayed at the Gillis House about two weeks. At the end of this time Uncle Edwin was forced to sell the hotel. The ruffians threatened to place a cannon on the hill back of the house and fire into it. Father returned to Lawrence, with the first party of emigrants under his command, over the northern route, and at his request our friend Mr. Edwards came to Kansas City after us, as it was not deemed safe for father to come. Great was our joy when we learned that father had returned to Lawrence and that we were to go to him. It was on the 13th day of August, the day after the battle of Franklin. We went in the stage, and when we drove up to the hotel in Westport a crowd of men surrounded us and tried to get us out of the stage, as

they wanted to send a lot of men up to Franklin. One of them argued with mother that it was not right for her to take such a family into a new territory. The agent of the company was with the stage, or else we probably would not have been allowed to go. A party of horsemen followed a long distance, and we were afraid that we might be dumped on the prairie. This was the last day that it was safe for travelers to pass between Kansas City and Lawrence for a long time. We had a hot, dusty and uncomfortable ride, but arrived safely toward evening. As we drove up to the Cincinnati House we were delighted that father was there to welcome us, and happy hearts greeted him, the dearest father in the whole world. We were entertained at the hospitable home of Mr. Gaius Jenkins until father could find a house, which seemed an impossibility, and we were obliged to accept Mr. Jenkins' offer of a log cabin on his place, where we lived until the following Christmas. We entertained, while staying there, a number of noted men, many of whom came overland in father's company. Among them was the poet, Richard Realf, Mr. E. B. Whitman and Mr. Charles L. Edwards, who looked after us during father's absence and for many years made his home with us.

"The house we moved into Christmas was destroyed by fire in November of the following year, and another move was necessary. Father at this time was building the Eldridge House, on the site of the old Free State hotel, having purchased the same from the Emigrant Aid Company. Within a few months after the destruction of the dwelling we had been occupying we moved into the 'Eldridge House,' which was indeed a happy home, and in which I was married. The wedding was during the Civil War, and there were officers and bands from four regiments in the house. The hotel was our home until its destruction by Quantrill, August 21, 1863."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### LAST DAYS OF SHANNON.

THE SUDDEN and aggressive activity displayed by the free-state men, crowned at every step with signal success, capturing three most troublesome strongholds in as many days, brought great joy to Lawrence, but dismay to the enemy. From desultory defense or sullen submission as unwilling victims to systematic and successful aggression was a wide departure for the free-state men. Franklin had yielded them a cannon; Fort Saunders, arms and provisions; Fort Titus, a prize richer than both, not only in its material results but still more in its significance. For Titus was the embodiment of the border-ruffian ideal. What Atchison, Stringfellow and the lesser exponents of the slavery propaganda were in council, he was in execution. Also like them he was ready to instigate what he would not dare to perform. As the head executioner of the secret mandates of the propaganda he had established himself, with a select band of followers, in the vicinity of Lecompton. When not under summons as a posse or under call as militia, he exercised his force in night raids, plundering and harassing free-state men until his band became a scourge and his name a terror to the neighborhood. The destruction of his stronghold within sight of the Federal camp, with himself and the most faithful of his band carried as prisoners to Lawrence, was a revelation to the territorial authorities of the resources, capabilities and audacity of the Free-state party, and an intimation of their further purposes. It also exposed the sluggishness of the United States troops in interposing between a band of desperadoes and their just punishment. To the terror of Lecompton, it was a threat that her own destruction might come in a night.

The attack upon Titus was plainly heard in Lecompton, and the report of its capture quickly following threw its population into a tumult. Among the leaders there was hurrying to and fro and hasty consultations, with paleness and trepidation. Among the Federal officials there appeared hesitancy, uncertainty, and an evident sense of faintness under the weight of responsibility suddenly forced upon them. Among the rank and file it was little short of a panic, and among the noncombatants a stampede, women and children being sent across the river to find safety in the woods and concealment in the underbrush. The headquarters of the slave propaganda in the field, whose very name stood for all that was odious to freemen, was now isolated and cut off from any speedy relief. Frantic appeals which had been made to Missouri on the loss of Franklin had not yet been responded to. Lawrence lay between, invested with a vengeful and exultant force. Imagination, excited by an accusing conscience, saw in the approaching companies of northern emigrants hordes of vandals bearing down upon them. The condition was one that demanded prompt action. It was a case in which neither writs nor indict-

ments nor any of the legal machinery heretofore used could be of avail. Diplomacy only could save.

But while Lecompton was in despair, Lawrence was exultant, and found herself raised from the condition of discarded suppliants to a dignity invested with treaty rights. It was considered discrete that the governor should go to Lawrence to negotiate with the free-state leaders rather than summon them to Lecompton, lest they might come with too cumbersome a retinue. So early on the following day—Sunday, the 17th—Governor Shannon came into Lawrence attended by two aides, Major Sedgwick and Dr. Aristides Rodrigue. As Major Sedgwick's sympathies were with the free-state cause, he executed his orders in the least offensive manner, and just so far as the military code compelled him.

When unsupported, Governor Shannon was lacking in firmness and magisterial presence. The service of his military aide would compensate for the first, and the conscious dignity of a classic name and of a heroic surname that invested the postmaster amply supplied the other. His military aide had apprised the governor that the majesty of the law and the dignity of his office required a demand for the unconditional release of Titus and his fellow prisoners. An interview with the committee of safety was obtained and the demand made. After consultation I was made spokesman of the committee of five, three of whom were James Blood, William Hutchinson, and Col. Sam Walker (the other one I have forgotten).

To the demand for the surrender of the prisoners I replied:

"Governor, we have but one proposition to make: When you return our prisoners which you hold, untried and unharmed, here, by the United States soldiers, and put the cannon which your officials took from Lawrence on the 21st of May into the hands of Major Sedgwick subject to our call, we will deliver up Titus and his men; otherwise you shall never see a hair of their heads."

The governor replied that he could not treat with his subjects—that we were asking what he, as governor, could not concede. I replied:

"Governor, you will have to come to it, as it is the only proposition we will make."

While the governor was hesitating I entered into a conversation with Major Sedgwick, in which he remarked:

"Colonel, you are rather tough on the old man, but I guess, under the circumstances, you are about right."

The governor finally conceded our conditions, and the terms of the treaty were executed. The cannon was placed with Major Sedgwick, the Franklin prisoners were on the following morning escorted to Lawrence by the troops and formally released, and Titus and his band carried back by the same squad of soldiers.

While the parties to the treaty were in conference our whole available force was under arms, marching and countermarching through the streets and maneuvering to make the most imposing array, and circling around the hotel where the conference was held, in an endless column, as the governor reviewed them from a front window.



"How many troops have you here?" he inquired with an expression of bewildered surprise. As our purpose was to impress him with our military strength rather than to expose our weakness, it is needless to say that I did not minimize our numbers.

On the conclusion of the treaty, which was a diplomatic triumph for the free-state men, the governor desired to talk to the people. The crowd, however, was not in a mood to hearken. They could not condone the atrocities that had been committed with his official connivance, and it was only on the entreaties and threats of Colonel Walker, who had won the admiration of the "boys" by his daring and gallantry, that he was permitted to be heard; and then not as "governor," but as "Wilson Shannon." It is only due him to say that he had been apprised of the appointment of his successor, who had been already commissioned, and he was desirous of transferring his authority with the distressing "Kansas imbroglio," if not fully settled, at least in a quiet state.

When finally the crowd consented to hear him, he said in part:

*"Fellow Citizens:* I appear before you under very extraordinary circumstances, and I ask your attention for a few moments to a few remarks in relation to them. I came down here to-day for the purpose of adjusting these difficulties, if possible, and I regret as much as any man can—as much as any man within the sound of my voice—the existence of these difficulties. I wish too, to set myself right before the people of Lawrence. I have been traduced and misapprehended through the press; my motives—those which heretofore have actuated me—have either been misunderstood or purposely aspersed, and things have been said of me which never happened. . . . In a few days my successor will be among the people of this territory, and I desire now to say that the few days which remain of my continuance in office will be devoted to further peace and harmony and to the carrying out, as far as in me lies, the terms of agreement which will be the final settlement of all strife. . . ."

An admirable purpose, but not destined to fulfillment. The quick succession of defeats, completed by the crushing blow in the destruction of Fort Titus, had thrown the Lecompton leaders into a state of helpless exasperation and wrung from them a piteous and importunate appeal to their allies in Missouri. "Franklin is taken by the abolitionists and burnt to the ground! Lecompton is surrounded by eight hundred men! Colonel Titus killed! Law and order party being murdered by the Northern army! Families are flying from burning homes! We call upon our friends in Missouri, in the name of humanity, to come to the rescue with men and provisions to support them. We have determined to clean the territory or fall in the attempt. . . . To arms at once, and come to the rescue!" This was the burden of the bulletins sent by express to St. Joseph, Liberty, Platte City and Westport, authenticated on the border by the signatures of D. R. Atchison, W. H. Russell, A. G. Boone and B. F. Stringfellow, who attested that "war, organized and matured, is now being waged by the abolitionists."

When the furor that called forth this outburst had spent itself the collapse that set in brought on a state of splenetic outbursts and fault-finding. The governor on returning to Lecompton found himself suddenly in the midst of a hostile camp, chided for inaction, loaded with blame, and denounced for the surrender of the whole position of the Pro-

slavery party by his concessions at Lawrence. And the agreement which he had hoped to be "a final settlement of all strife" became an aggravation of a bitter feud not to be suppressed except by complete surrender or extermination. Added to this, echoes from the Missouri border of the bulletins sent out presaged a larger and more ferocious invasion than had yet been inflicted upon Kansas.

Under the depression of such conditions Shannon could see nothing but impending disaster, that he could only flee from but not avert. He had whistled "Down brakes" at Lawrence; at Lecompton he opened the throttle and jumped from the engine. He hastily reported to the department commander at Leavenworth, General Smith:

"This place is in a most dangerous and critical situation. . . . We are threatened with utter extermination by a large body of free-state men. . . . I have just returned from Lawrence, where I have been this day, with the view of procuring the release of nineteen prisoners that were taken. I saw in that place at least 800 men, who manifested a fixed purpose to demolish this town. . . . The women and children have been mostly sent across the river, and there is a general panic among the people."

And to President Pierce he wrote, on August 18:

". . . I am unwilling to perform the duties of governor of this territory any longer. . . . You will therefore consider my official connection with this territory as at an end."

And without waiting the arrival of his approaching successor, he at once abandoned his post and set out for the East, furtively wending his way through the unsettled Delaware reserve to Fort Leavenworth, where he secured passage on a Missouri river boat, and saluted his incoming successor with a tale of woe at Glasgow.

## CHAPTER XV.

### TRIP TO IOWA FOR SUPPLIES.

ON THE ARRIVAL of our expedition in Lawrence there was found to be a growing scarcity of provisions for the support of the population as well as of ammunition for their defense. As only a small part of the necessaries of life, mainly beef, corn and vegetables—wheat not yet being raised—were produced in the territory, the main reliance for supplies was on Missouri. To obtain these, especially since the outbreak in May, had been attended with a risk so great that it prevented everyone, except through stress of absolute necessity, from making the attempt. Wagons were plundered of their contents. Sometimes the whole outfit was seized by bands of southern marauders, the owners thinking themselves fortunate to be let off with their lives. And could supplies be obtained, there were many who had been reduced by the troubles to such a state as to be unable to pay for them. Now another invasion from Missouri was impending, gathering volume every day, and it threatened to surpass, both in numbers and vindictiveness, any that had been inflicted upon Kansas heretofore. Should this state of affairs last but for a short time it was evident that there would be many cases of suffering, and not a few of absolute want. It was decided that an effort must be made to obtain supplies, or the means to purchase them, from another source. I was commissioned to go back by the northern route on this mission. To ascertain the exact wants of the people, on the authority of the committee, I made a personal investigation. The results will be best stated in a report made by me to the board of commissioners appointed by the legislature of 1859 to consider the losses growing out of the troubles of 1855-1856. Among other things, I say:

“ . . . the soldiers and citizens or people assembled in Lawrence were reduced to the lowest point of sustenance. Many of them for weeks together had nothing to subsist on but green corn, squashes, watermelons and other vegetables; hundreds had no flour, meal or meat of any kind for days and days together. Sickness prevailed among those subjected to such a diet. In Lawrence a large proportion of all here assembled were reduced to those straits. . . . The surrounding country, as well as the more fortunate in the city itself, had to furnish such means of sustenance as wants of the hungry and the necessities of the sick demanded. . . . I went to every store in town and every supposed depot to ascertain what amount of flour or meal was on hand, exclusive of such limited supplies as might be in dwelling houses for temporary family use. I found there were but fourteen sacks of flour; . . . could find no meal, bacon or beef of any consequence; stocks were exhausted.”

I at once set out for Tabor, the sympathies of whose citizens for the people of Kansas made it the most inviting point from which to obtain the needed supplies. Leaving Lawrence late in the evening, I passed the

camp of the United States troops at Lecompton, and quietly slipped by a border-ruffian camp at Tecumseh, reaching Topeka about midnight. From here I had the company of Col. Milton C. Dickey, whom I had persuaded to accompany me. Setting out next morning and traveling twenty-five hours, we reached Nebraska City, 125 miles distant, using up the horse of Colonel Dickey.

Our trail lay through the Kickapoo Indian country, over prairies with-



ALICE ELDRIDGE  
(Mrs. W. B. Learnard).

out a human habitation in sight except now and then a solitary cabin near the crossing of a timbered stream. The ingress of northern immigration had aroused the border ruffians to watchfulness. A company of United States troops stationed in Doniphan county to guard the sessions of the Federal court had been charged to reconnoiter and demolish forts that were rumored to have been built on this line. But worst of all, it was within striking distance of two border companies that had made their name a terror throughout the country by the wantonness of their outrages, both names significant of their characters—the "Doniphan Tigers"

and the "Kickapoo Rangers." On one of the loneliest reaches of the trail we saw coming toward us four horsemen of more than suspicious appearance, ideal Kickapoo Rangers, as we had seen them in Lawrence on the 21st of May—prototypes of the modern tramp mounted. With no chance to elude them, our main hope of safety lay in the ready use of our revolvers. So with weapons clasped and a bold front we spurred up our horses to meet the raiders, ready to deliver the first shot on any signs of hostility. But just at the critical moment the most desperate-looking of the Rangers called out, to my joyful surprise, "Hello, Colonel! Is that you?" It was General Lane on one of his wild rides with three of his staff, coming in from Nebraska, where he had gone after the capture of Fort Saunders. Further along the monotony of the ride was broken by another incident. We again saw in the distance four horsemen presenting the appearance of enemy scouts. Courage had carried us safely through one meeting with as hard-looking a set as these were, and we proposed to play the game of bluff. So putting spurs to our horses and giving as wild a war whoop as we could command, we charged upon them with a lively fusillade. They stood not on the order of their going, but fled as wildly as their horses could carry them until they reached an eminence on our right, and at a respectful distance faced around and watched us out of sight. Another incident that illustrates a common danger in those times, and the cause of not a few casualties, occurred on this ride. In a region where we had reason to be on our guard we were passing in the dark in single file along the trail as it led through a skirt of timber, with Colonel Dickey ahead. With revolvers held in readiness, cautiously feeling our way, mine was suddenly discharged, startling the colonel and stampeding his horse. "What's that, Colonel?" called out Dickey as he wheeled around and tried to penetrate the darkness. "I beg your pardon," I explained; "it was an accident." On examination by daylight it was discovered that my ball had made a hole in the horse's ear, and must have passed in its course very close to Colonel Dickey's body.

From Nebraska City we passed over to Tabor, in company with Columbus Hornsby, Conant and other Kansas men, August 26. As the threatening condition in Kansas made the first and most urgent demand for powder and lead, I obtained a conveyance, and with Capt. A. D. Searle, who was still employed at Tabor as assistant, set out in the direction of Council Bluffs to obtain the needed material. The incidents of the trip are best told by Mr. Searle. He says:

"We stopped at stores and groceries at all cross roads and small towns, and bought all [powder and lead] we could find, and arrived at Council Bluffs the next day, expecting to get plenty there, but we found but little bullion, and had to buy 1,500 pounds of lead pipe to make out a load. We hired a man and team to take it, and what we had bought along the road, to Tabor, and we put up at the hotel, expecting to stay there until the next day. It was not long before the man we had hired came running to the hotel, very much excited, and said a mob had collected and stopped him from taking out our goods. We went down to the warehouse, and sure enough the mob was there, and they were very boisterous, and swore that no d—n Yankees should take lead found there to shoot Missourians with, and our man refused to start and went away with his team.

The colonel [Eldridge] was hot, and was doing some fine talk to the mob, who were jubilant over their success, when a nice elderly man, wearing a broad-brimmed hat, stepped up to us and said: 'Friends, thee seem to be in trouble. What is the matter?' We explained to him that we wanted our freight taken to Tabor. He very coolly replied, 'I will take it there for thee.' He soon came around with a fine span of horses and a new wagon, and we assisted him to load the goods, and while the mob stood looking on he drove away, saying that if any of them wanted anything of him he could be found on the road to Tabor.

We went back to the hotel and ordered our team, the colonel [Eldridge] declaring he would not stay in such a town overnight, and we started on our return to Tabor. It got very dark, and we got off the main road and found ourselves in a large hayfield in the Missouri river bottom, and completely lost. We hitched our team to a haystack and crawled under an old canvas left by the haymakers and spent the night. In the morning we found our road and got back to Tabor on the 28th. Our Quaker friend arrived on the 30th, with our goods all right. He refused to take any pay for his services, and said when we wanted another job of that kind done to call on him, giving us his name, which I have forgotten. We learned he was one of the wealthiest men in that part of the country.

. . . " 49

On a like mission as mine, though more especially for obtaining larger stores of ammunition called for by the increasing activity of affairs, Robert Morrow had been sent by the committee of safety to lay the matter before the national committee at Chicago, and personally press upon them the urgency of our need.

The national committee readily responded to his request, furnishing him with a letter of credit on Fitz Henry Warren, a banker of Burlington, Iowa, who fitted him out with a team and a load of ammunition. This he drove across to Tabor, and, giving it in charge of three young men who had accompanied him, he, on my solicitation, returned with me to Chicago. I had determined to importune the committee for means to recruit and transport a company of at least 300 emigrants. Arriving at Chicago in the forenoon, we proceeded at once to the rooms of the committee and laid the matter before them, with an estimate of \$10,000 as the amount needed at the beginning. Their reply was that it was impossible to raise this sum within the time required; that the funds were coming in so slowly they were becoming discouraged and feared they would have to give Kansas up. I could not bear that suggestion, and asked:

"Have you not in this city twenty men with wealth and patriotism enough to come in and guarantee \$500 each, with the assurance that it will be made up to them?"

This proposition struck them favorably, and they decided to call a meeting for further consultation at three o'clock, and requested us to be present. But being detained by other business and arriving at the place of meeting a half hour later, I found the committee had dispersed. To relieve me of my feeling of disappointment the secretary announced: "Your money is ready," stating that the requisite number of persons had called in and guaranteed the necessary amount.

Supplied with funds, I at once bought wagons, tents, provisions and equipage for the proposed company and shipped them to Mt. Pleasant,

Iowa, where brother Thomas was acting as agent. The next step is best described by Mr. Morrow. In a recent letter he says:

"We started for Mt. Pleasant, thirty miles west of Burlington, the end of the railroad, and went into camp. In three weeks we had thirty or forty wagons and teams loaded with powder, lead, provisions and arms, and 300 men had come into camp, mostly active young men wanting to go to Kansas to make it a free state. Among the number was S. S. Prouty."

Here Mr. Morrow gives some account of his independent mission on which he had been sent by the people of Lawrence. Concerning it he says:

"While you were getting up the teams I went to Iowa City, the then capital, to see Governor Grimes about getting some state arms. He said if I could get them without compromising him he had no objections. Some friends of Kansas aided me, and at night we loaded three wagons with arms out of the arsenal. These were made part of your outfit and brought into Kansas."

We now set out on our second march across the prairies of Iowa, this time from Mt. Pleasant by a direct westward route. I had fulfilled the pledge which I had made to Mr. Morrow on setting out from Tabor—that three weeks from that day I would be on my return trip with 300 men.

Before leaving Mt. Pleasant, on consultation it was deemed prudent for Mr. Morrow to return by the river route to Kansas, interview the governor, learn the present condition of affairs, and meet me on the Kansas line. The inauguration of Geary's administration, which had occurred since our leaving the territory, had put an entirely different phase on affairs, and the character in which we should enter Kansas must correspond to the conditions as they then existed. Though I had received in June a promise from Pierce of Geary's appointment, and his commission had been issued on July 31, it was the 9th of September when he arrived at Fort Leavenworth. And while his appointment had been made as a pledge of impartial conduct on the part of the administration between the contending parties in Kansas, the delay in entering upon his duties permitted affairs to drift into a condition from which only external aid could save the Free-state party from extermination. Whether such aid had come in the new governor, or whether he would yield, as his predecessor had, to the implacable despotism that ruled at Leecompton, it was important to learn.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### WOODSON INTERFERES.

SHANNON had at Lawrence effected an amnesty that by firmness and consistency might have been made lasting. But at Lecompton, breathing the air of panic and despotism that pervaded that town, "fear took hold of him as a strong man armed," and he hastily divested himself of any further responsibility by leaving affairs in the hands of Secretary Woodson, an anxiously willing agent of the slave power. Woodson, feeling that his term was both short and uncertain, hastened to rescue the border ruffians' cause from the peril in which the abdicating governor had placed it. And taking the acts of the free-state men at Franklin, Fort Saunders and Titus, which his predecessor by his last official act had condoned, as a text for an inflammatory proclamation, he set forth that—

"Kansas is infested with large bodies of armed men, many of whom have just arrived from the states, combined and confederated together, and amply supplied with all the munitions of war, under the direction of a common head, with a thorough military organization; who have been and are still engaged in murdering the law-abiding citizens of the territory, driving others from their homes and compelling them to flee to the states for protection; capturing and holding others as prisoners of war, plundering them of their property, and in some instances burning down their houses, and robbing United States post offices and the local militia of arms furnished them by the government, in open defiance and contempt of the laws of the territory and of the constitution and laws of the United States, and of the civil and military authority thereof; all for the purpose of subverting by force and violence the government established by law of Congress in the territory. . . . Declaring the said territory to be in a state of open insurrection and rebellion, I do hereby call upon all law-abiding citizens of the territory to rally to the support of their country and its laws, and require and command all officers, civil and military, and all other citizens of the territory, to aid and assist by all means in their power in putting down the insurrectionists and bringing to condign punishment all persons engaged with them."

An indictment strictly true if reversed as to parties.

The prelude to this proclamation was the fabricated reports of savage warfare, of an exaggerated falsity, sent out by those high in authority and published over the border from which "aid and assistance" was to come. The reverberations were the malignant screeds of the border press. Only a literal copy of one of these can give a conception of the most effective of the methods used by the slave power for inflaming the masses and demonizing the vicious, and account for the barbarities of the conflict. The following is from the home paper of Senator Atchison, the *Argus*, Platte City, Mo., and is the reverberation of the fall of Fort Titus:



[August 18, 1856, Extra.]

**"IMPORTANT FROM KANSAS — CIVIL WAR AND REBELLION — WOMEN  
AND CHILDREN FLYING FROM THEIR HOMES  
FOR THEIR LIVES!"**

"From sources of unquestioned credit we have learned, and now chronicle, the following highly important and exciting news from Kansas:

"The notorious Jim Lane is now at the head of from 600 to 1,000 armed outlaws and robbers, busily engaged in the work of devastation on the south side of the Kansas river, in the neighborhood of Leecompton. The depredations have thus far resulted in the breaking up and total destruction of the Georgia settlement on the Marais des Cygnes, a large settlement of Alabamians in the same neighborhood, an attack on the town of Franklin, robbery of the post office at that place, and the violent abuse of the postmaster and his wife; the burning of the town . . . and robbery of citizens of everything on which hands could be laid. . . . Having subdued the defenders of Franklin, the abolitionists then turned their attention to the destruction of isolated houses—residences of proslavery settlers whom they have sworn to drive out of the territory or exterminate.

"Colonel Titus' house fell first, and it is believed he fell a bloody sacrifice in its defense. Secretary Woodson's house was bombarded and burnt next; Colonel Clarke's [the murderer of Barber] almost simultaneously shared the same fate, the colonel and his family having just barely made their escape as the inhuman bandits applied the torch. In every direction the black smoke was seen last Saturday night ascending from private dwellings. Secretary Woodson has either been killed or is a prisoner in the hands of the abolitionists. Colonel Titus is undoubtedly killed, together with many others who bravely fought for their homes and their families. Colonel Clarke is now here with his family, where he has sought an asylum from the merciless fury of the abolition outlaws. Governor Shannon, when last heard from, had fled from Leecompton and was wending his way on foot towards the Missouri, to escape the fury of the vengeance of his pursuers. To sum up the whole, the facts are these: The whole Proslavery party south of the Kaw river have either been killed or have fled to places of safety. . . . Missourians! the war rages upon your borders—at your very thresholds! Your brethren and friends in Kansas are this day being butchered and driven from their homes, and they now call upon you for succor and protection. The constitution of your country and the laws under which you have so long lived, as well as your own rights, menaced by as reckless and abandoned a foe as ever erected its bloody crest to disturb the repose of society, demand that you should rise up as one man and put an instant and effectual quietus to the hired tools of abolition, disunion and aggression, now roaming rampant over the plains of Kansas with firebrand and sabre.

"Citizens of Platte county! the war is upon you, at your very doors. Arouse yourselves to speedy vengeance, and rub out the bloody traitors. Recollect that, although this unholy and unnatural war is carried on in Kansas, it is against you and your institutions. . . . Rouse up, then, and strangle the demon of disunion and destruction. . . ."

A torch among tinder could produce no quicker flame than these frantic appeals, repeated by the proslavery press, with added tales of atrocities and all the varied notes of invective, among the resentful population of the border.

The flame lit up by Woodson became a conflagration that threatened the complete wiping out of the Free-state party.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### ARRIVAL OF GEARY.

**H**APPILY for Kansas, Woodson's rule was short. Just as the gathering storm was ready to burst he was supplanted by Geary. That a few more days added to the "little brief authority" of the acting governor would have enabled him to "play fantastic tricks before high heaven" will appear from the official account of the condition of the territory by the new governor, as he found it on the day of his arrival, written in a letter to Secretary Marcy. The force of his statements will better appear when it is known that Gen. P. F. Smith was in full sympathy with the slave party, though, being a soldier, not in accord with their methods.

On the day of his arrival Geary reported back to Washington:

"FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS TERRITORY, September 9, 1856.

"SIR—I arrived here this morning, and having passed the day mostly in consultation with Gen. P. F. Smith in relation to the affairs of the territory, which, as I am now on the spot, I begin more clearly to understand, it is no exaggeration to say that the existing difficulties are of a more complicated character than I had anticipated.

"I find that I have not simply to contend against bands of armed ruffians and brigands, whose sole aim and end is assassination and robbery, infatuated adherents and advocates of conflicting political sentiments and local institutions, and evil disposed persons actuated by a desire to obtain elevated positions, but worst of all, against the influence of men who have been placed in authority, and have employed all the destructive agents around them to promote their own personal interests, at the sacrifice of every just, honorable and lawful consideration.

"I have barely time to give you a brief statement of facts as I find them. The town of Leavenworth is now in the hands of armed bodies of men, who, having been enrolled as militia, perpetrate outrages of the most atrocious character, under shadow of authority from the territorial government. Within a few days these men have robbed and driven from their houses unoffending citizens; have fired upon and killed others in their own dwellings, and stolen horses and property under the pretense of employing them in the public service. They have seized persons who had committed no offense, and after stripping them of their valuables placed them on steamers and sent them out of the territory. Some of these bands, who have thus violated the rights and privileges and shamefully and shockingly misused and abused the oldest inhabitants of the territory who had settled here with their wives and children, are strangers from distant states who have no interest in nor care for the welfare of Kansas, and contemplate remaining here only so long as opportunities for mischief and plunder exist.

"In isolated country places, no man's life is safe. The roads are filled with armed robbers, and murders for mere plunder are of daily occurrence. Almost every farmhouse is deserted, and no traveler has the temerity to venture upon the highways without an escort.

"Such is the condition of Kansas, faintly pictured. It can be no worse. . . . In making the foregoing statements I have endeavored to give the truth and nothing but the truth. . . .

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"JOHN W. GEARY, *Governor of Kansas Territory.*

"Hon. William L. Marcy."

That this picture is not overdrawn is attested by the many atrocities chronicled at the time, such as the descent on the Quaker mission on the Shawnee reserve; the sacking and destruction of Osawatomie by the company of Missourians under Capt. J. W. Reid; the wanton murders of David C. Buffum and Hoppe; the burning of the free-state dwellings around Lecompton; the raids of the Kickapoo Rangers; and the doings of Captain Emory in Leavenworth with his organized militia, as well as many a secret outrage that found no chronicler.

It was to meet such a condition as this that the missions of Mr. Morrow and myself were entered upon in the darkest days of the conflict, and when the happy result of Geary's interposition, which made the military equipment unnecessary, could scarcely have been hoped for, much less assured before their accomplishment. Then it would have been criminal negligence not to have provided means of defense. Now changed conditions required changed purposes.

Geary assumed control in an opportune time, and, as events proved, with a firm hand, a self-assurance and a settled purpose, with a determination to restore peace and security to the citizens of Kansas, a clear conception of the effective means to be used, and an assertive bearing that gave authority to his commands. In dealing with the desperate condition in which he found affairs he was guided not only by his own sense of justice, but also by the exigencies of the presidential campaign then at a critical stage. "Bleeding Kansas" was making sad havoc in the Democratic ranks. There was a party demand that her wounds should be stanchd. He had been detailed to take charge of the patient, commissioned, in the language of his official instructions, "first, to maintain order and quiet in the territory of Kansas; and second, if disturbances occur therein, to bring to punishment the offenders." How earnestly and effectually he fulfilled this commission will appear.

On landing at Fort Leavenworth, before he had yet formally assumed control, there was thrust upon him a case that called out an assertion of his authority and gave an indication of the policy that he had come to enforce, demonstrating that he was to be at the head of his own administration.

Three citizens of Lawrence, Samuel Sutherland, E. B. Whitman and Abram Wilder, who had gone to Leavenworth for needed provisions for the beleaguered town, having a passport from the commander of the militia and under the safeguard of a sergeant of the United States army, had been taken prisoners by a company of armed and mounted militia under command of Captain Emory, and their horses, wagons and other property seized. The report of the affair was brought by the sergeant to General Smith while he was in consultation with Governor Geary, and within some three hours after his arrival. The promptitude of the governor in firmly dealing with the situation has been put upon record. The executive minutes of that day, September 9, 1856, read:

"The governor immediately made a requisition upon General Smith for a force of infantry sufficiently large to rescue the prisoners, and bring them, with Captain Emory and his company, to Fort Leavenworth. A detachment of two hundred men was accordingly detailed upon this service, the commanding officer being instructed to execute the following:

## "ORDER.

"FORT LEAVENWORTH, K. T., September 9, 1856.

"To whom it may concern: Any officer of the militia now in the service of the government of Kansas territory, or any other government officer, is hereby directed to comply with the requisition of the United States officer bearing this, concerning the rescue of prisoners from custody this morning.

"JOHN W. GEARY,

"Governor of Kansas Territory."

"This order was promptly fulfilled. Captain Emory and his company, with their three prisoners, were brought to the fort by the troops detailed for that purpose early in the afternoon. The prisoners were released, and Captain Emory and eight of his men placed under arrest."

A firm hand was at the helm and the crew were brought to the rail. This sudden check of Emory, who was a United States mail agent and brother of Major Emory, a respected army officer and later a major-general in the War of the Rebellion, brought to a close a nine days' carnival of crime in which anarchy and outrage, stained with blood, ran riot. Beginning with drunken exultation over the election of a proslavery mayor, the seizure of arms and the driving out of the whole free-state population was determined upon. The murder of William Phillips, whom they had previously outraged, while attempting to defend his home, and the driving of fifty of the prominent free-state citizens aboard the *Polar Star*, which had been detained at the wharf, were the results of the first day's ravages. The scent of blood and plunder swelled the lawless band next day to 800, who scoured the whole region as for game, and sent the free-state inhabitants fleeing for their lives to the ravines, to the brush, and many to the fort, only to be repulsed by the commandant. One hundred men, women and children driven aboard the *Emma* and sent down the river under armed guard marked prominently the ravages of the second day. The shock of these outbursts set free all the lawless elements with which that region abounded, and yielded a harvest of unrecorded outrages, that if less conspicuous, were no less atrocious.

But Leavenworth was not alone to suffer border vengeance. Simultaneously formidable bands under Atchison, Reid and Rev. Martin White were ravaging in the south. The nonresistant Quaker mission, Osawatimie, and the country around were plundered and laid waste, and the whole region saved from devastation only by the check given by the combined free-state forces at Bull creek. Concerted with the ravages on the north and on the south was the burning of all the free-state dwellings in the vicinity of Lecompton. The only event to lighten the gloom was the invasion of Lecompton by the forces under General Lane.

Geary's abrupt and decisive calling down of the flower of the Kansas militia was a staggering blow to rampant border-ruffianism from which it never recovered. It was followed by a reprimand to Captain Emory's superior officer, Colonel Clarkson. In an order to that officer under date of September 10, detailing the affair, he said:

"The only excuse that can be offered for an outrage of this character is the plea of ignorance as to the position of the party to whom reference is made. . . . You will please guard against errors of this description as far as possible in future. I also request that you will at once take the necessary measures to have returned to the three persons who were seized by Captain Emory's men, their horses, wagons and other property, precisely in the condition in which they were found."

From this it was evident that the governor would not confine himself to redressing individual outrages, but that he would strike at the source of the troubles. True to this policy, his first act on reaching Lecompton, after his inaugural address, was a proclamation discharging the militia and ordering the volunteer marauders "instantly to disband or quit the territory," with notice that they would "answer the contrary at their peril." His reasons for this sudden reversal of the established policy of his predecessors he gave in a dispatch to Secretary Marcy. He says:

"I have determined to dismiss the present organized militia, after consultation with and by advice of General Smith, and for the reasons that they are not enrolled in accordance with the laws, and many of them are not citizens of the territory; that some of them were committing outrages under pretense of serving the public; and that they were unquestionably perpetrating rather than diminishing the troubles with which the territory is agitated."

A light affair it seemed at first, to be accomplished by a stroke of his pen, but requiring for its final enforcement the threatening presence of a squadron of troops and a United States battery. The character, number and purposes of the force he had attacked were impressed upon the governor before the echoes of his proclamation had died away. A midnight messenger from Gen. Wm. A. Heiskell, on Mission creek, who had not yet been apprised of the new order of things, reported a force of organized militia under him of 800 men, "now in the field ready for duty and impatient to act," followed two hours later by another dispatch announcing the increase of the force to 1,000, "called into the field by proclamation of Acting Governor Woodson," and tendered to the governor. But Heiskell's dispatch was an intimation of a more formidable invasion under the guise of militia. Woodson's inflammatory proclamation, with the phantom fears of an approaching Northern army, had incited the border to redoubled energy, and, quickened by the "hazard of a second edition of imbecility" feared in the newly appointed governor, had gathered a force of 2,700 with four pieces of artillery, and as formidable in its equipment of titled officers as it was in numbers, was closing in upon Lawrence. Woodson, to whose proclamation they had responded, now reduced to secretary, with the adjutant general who had been sent by Geary to disarm and disband the militia without a moment's delay, were hesitating or unable to enforce their orders. Again a midnight dispatch from his official messenger, following a train of others from Lawrence, apprised the governor of the threatening and mutinous condition of the force, and that skirmishing between the outposts of the two parties had already taken place. Geary's action in this crisis is best told in his official report of the affair. He says:

"Satisfied that the most prompt and decisive measures were necessary to prevent the sacrifice of many lives and the destruction of one of the finest and most prosperous towns in the territory, and avert a state of affairs which must have inevitably involved the country in a most disastrous civil war, I dispatched the following order to Colonel Cooke:

"Proceed at all speed with your command to Lawrence and prevent a collision if possible, and leave a portion of your troops there for that purpose."

"Accordingly, the entire available United States force was put in motion and reached Lawrence at an early hour in the evening. Here the

worst apprehensions of the citizens were discovered to have been well founded. Twenty-seven hundred men, under command of Generals Heiskell, Reid, Atchison, Richardson, Stringfellow, etc., were encamped on the Wakarusa, about four miles from Lawrence, eager and determined to exterminate that place and all its inhabitants. An advance party of 300 men had already taken possession of Franklin, one mile from the camp and three miles from Lawrence, and skirmishing parties had begun to engage in deadly conflict.

"Fully appreciating the awful calamities that were impending, I hastened with all possible dispatch to the encampment, assembled the officers of the militia, and, in the name of the President of the United States, demanded a suspension of hostilities. I had sent in advance the secretary and adjutant general of the territory, with orders to carry out the letter and spirit of my proclamations; but up to the time of my arrival these orders had been unheeded, and I could discover but little disposition to obey them."

At first stubborn and defiant, now hesitating and sullen, the horde of invaders broke up, not without murmurs of disappointment and dissatisfaction, evidently yielding more to the silent persuasion of Colonel Cooke with his "300 dragoons and battery of light artillery" than to the patriotic appeals of the governor. But the most convincing evidence of the malicious and vindictive character of this "organized mob of militia," as he calls them, was given by their chief in command, Gen. John W. Reid. In leading his discarded band bootless to Missouri, they made his life miserable and he sent to Geary a plaintive note complaining of being "maligned and assailed for the manner of terminating the affair," and asking a vindication, prefacing the request with the confession:

"I am sorry to say we had too many men who were actuated by no higher motive than pillage and plunder, and also others who went to avenge real or supposed wrongs and who are greatly *outraged* that they were not permitted to enter Lawrence and plunder it, and hence are busy in attributing to me every motive but the true one for the result of affairs." 50

Now, when it is recalled that this same General Reid, of Missouri, on the 6th of June had led a band of 150 on a plundering raid upon Osawatomie, taking sixteen horses, disarming the entire population, and stripping the place of much valuable property; and again on the 30th of August, with 250 men and a cannon, had made a second raid upon the devoted town, prefacing it with the wanton murder of Frederick Brown and David Garrison, plundering and burning, leaving but four houses, and concluding it on their way back to Westport by killing one of their prisoners, Charlie Kaiser; and that the "organized mob of militia" led back upon Lawrence was the same band, with appetites whetted, reinforced by a horde hungering for blood and plunder—the conclusion is forced that the motive prompting the general to except Lawrence from the fate of Osawatomie was impressed upon him by the imperative arguments of Geary supported by United States dragoons and artillery.

The disbanding of this, the most formidable force that had invaded the territory, gave Geary the acknowledged mastership of the situation, and the people were assured that his authority would be used for the pro-

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50. For full text of General Reid's letter see "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 4, p. 562.

tection of the peaceable citizens. It was during this auspicious condition of affairs that Mr. Morrow and Mr. Winchell, accompanied by a committee from Lawrence consisting of Wm. Hutchinson and Gaius Jenkins, had an interview with the governor at Lecompton in reference to the admission to the territory of the company under my charge, then waiting at Nebraska City for advices. This company was in readiness to meet the requirements of the condition in which Kansas should be found. If peaceably received they would enter as quiet settlers, but if needed they would come in as a reinforcement to the harassed citizens, equipped for their own protection. These purposes Mr. Morrow explained to the governor, with the assurance that they were coming as settlers in good faith, not as hostile invaders or disturbers of the peace, and that in the present disturbed state of affairs they did not wish to enter the territory under any circumstances of suspicion, without notice to the governor.

The governor replied that while he had determined to prevent all armed invaders from entering the territory, he would welcome immigration of peaceable citizens. He then gave the committee the following note:

"EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,  
"LECOMPTON, KANSAS TERRITORY, September 30, 1856.

"*To all whom it may concern:* The bearer of this note, Robert Morrow, represents himself as the agent of certain peaceable *bona fide* immigrants about entering the territory, through Nebraska, under the escort of Colonel Eldridge, assisted by General Pomeroy and Colonel Perry.

"I welcome all such accessions to the population of this territory, come from whatever quarter; and I request all good citizens to afford shelter and protection to every person entering the territory for peaceable and lawful purposes.

"If the party under Colonel Eldridge come in this way, without threats or in a hostile attitude, I hereby request all military officers in the territory to give them a safe-conduct and permit them to pass without interruption.

JOHN W. GEARY,  
Governor of Kansas Territory.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### RETURN FROM IOWA WITH MEN AND SUPPLIES.

NOW TO RETURN to our trip across Iowa, a few incidents may be worth relating. At Osceola we received a welcome addition to our strength in Col. S. F. Tappan in command of a company of nine men, with a cannon which he had obtained, as I remember, in Ottawa, Ill. We were also encouraged by the company of General Pomeroy, Col. John A. Perry, Prof. Edward Daniels, and Richard Realf, who overtook us and shared our fortunes for the remainder of the route.

Arriving at Tabor October 1, we went into camp, and while awaiting advices from Kansas spent some days in reorganizing, drilling and outfitting a cavalry company in preparation for any hostile reception, should such be our fortune. The cannon was dismounted, placed in the bottom of one of the wagons and covered with corn; arms were concealed as well as could be, and emigrant outfits were made as conspicuous as possible.

On this expedition, as on the previous one, we were most hospitably treated by the people of Tabor, who seemed never to tire of showing us sympathy and kindness.

On the 4th we crossed over to Nebraska City and met Mr. Morrow with news from Kansas. The changed condition of affairs in the territory, the assurance of which he brought us, and the governor's letter was most welcome news to us, though there were some who showed disappointment at the failure of a chance to win glory.

Holding in abeyance our protective equipment, and displaying as conspicuously as possible our immigrant features, we set out for Kansas on Tuesday, October 7, and camped at Archer, near the line, on the evening of the 9th. Before crossing over it was thought best, on further consultation, to conform more strictly to the requirements of the governor's letter of safe-conduct, as it was learned that we were under the observation of an encampment of United States troops sent out to intercept "Lane's army of the North." To divest ourselves of all appearance of "hostile attitude," the enlistment of the company was annulled, with a tacit reliance on the honor and self-interest of its members, and the arms were more carefully concealed. While the display of arms might be considered a "hostile attitude," their possession was a legal right guaranteed by the constitution. Besides, there was not yet a certainty that the present peaceful state of affairs would endure. With reversed conditions, which would certainly occur should the reins again fall into the hands of the malign Woodson, these unarmed allies of the free-state remnant would become victims to border-ruffian savagery, incensed by their intrusion. The most imperative reason, however, for retaining the arms was that we had no place to store them where we could obtain them should necessity occur, and burial would ruin them. With the cannon it was



different. As its possession would most certainly compromise us, it was decided to do away with its convincing evidence of a military invasion by burying it. A fresh-made grave on the smooth prairie would certainly lead to discovery. To overcome this I directed that the hole should be dug within a tent and the dirt carefully thrown on a tent cloth drawn up to the edge. The cannon, wrapped in a cloth, could then be laid in the hole, the dirt returned and packed down level, with the sod replaced, and the remainder of the soil carried to a stream some half mile distant. When this was completed, leaving no trace of fresh earth, as large a fire as we had material to make was built over the grave, so no suspicion could be excited as to what lay beneath the ashes.

With our martial features thus smoothed over, at least to our own satisfaction, we crossed the line on the 10th of October, buoyant with the feeling that the expedition, undertaken under the most discouraging conditions, was about to come to a fortunate close; and that if not heartily welcomed by the governor, we would be at least permitted to pass in as freemen.

But we were yet to meet a rebuff. Soon after crossing the line we were brought to a halt by Deputy United States Marshal Wm. J. Preston with some 300 troops under Col. P. St. George Cooke, drawn up in line of battle with six pieces of artillery, questioned, searched, and placed under arrest. By Preston's orders the wagons were overhauled for arms, and such as were not claimed as personal property taken possession of. That this expedition was meant for serious work, and that it would have been a most valuable reinforcement to the free-state men, had the conditions been such as prevailed when first undertaken, will appear from Marshal Preston's official report<sup>51</sup> of arms taken, viz.: 3 boxes of navy revolver pistols, all new; 10 Sharps rifles, 145 breach-loading muskets, 85 percussion muskets, 115 bayonets, 63 sabres, and 61 dragoon saddles. Major H. H. Sibley, under whose escort the company was placed, remarks in his official report of the affair, "the absence of a proper proportion of families, there being only seven women to 240 men."<sup>52</sup> He was in blissful ignorance that there was really but one family, that of Henry Fox, of which the seven women were all members, and that they had been distributed to as many wagons to help conceal the stores with which they were loaded. The gallantry that characterizes the United States army restrained him from examining the contents of these wagons, so when the company was subsequently released at Topeka by the governor they were able to march into Lawrence with fife and drum, and banners flying, and each man was fully equipped for the defense of his rights.

This seeming act of bad faith on the part of the governor is accounted for by the necessities of the situation in which he was placed. He had been commissioned with special charge to settle the Kansas conflict at the period when it had reached a most dangerous crisis, inflaming the whole country, setting hostile sections in array against each other, provoking the intervention of states, threatening the overthrow of the Federal administration, and leading to the disruption of the Union. He had

51. "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 4, p. 607.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 610.

been sent into a field where every step was mined with explosives intimidating at least, if not destructive, to administer a government whose statutes were the enactments of a usurpation, and whose higher laws were the mandates of an intangible and implacable despot, executed by organized brigandage. He had accepted authority where change of administration had but added a new element to savage conflict, and where frequent intervals were often marked by the flashing up of a subordi-



JOSEPHINE PHEBE ELDRIDGE  
(Mrs. F. M. Allen).

nate who signalized his little brief authority by martial vigor and inflammatory proclamations; and with the whole array of his subordinates hesitating and distrustful or hostile and obstructive, with only the United States army officers to give him ready support. Yet, confronted by such perverse conditions, he did not hesitate. As Professor Spring says:

"Governor Geary stepped into the border tumult with the assertive bearing of a Titan. Superb and not wholly misplaced was his self-confidence. That he did not idealize the situation is clear, as he took pains to say that it could not be worse. Not only did he fully anticipate success, but the very desperation of affairs fascinated him." 53

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53. Spring's "Kansas," 1885, p. 197.

With the intuition of a born commander he grasped the situation at a glance, and moved to his purpose with promptness, boldness, firmness and judgment; with a martial tread that crushed obstructions, a vigor that forestalled resistance, and an air of assured supremacy that enforced submission from the most contumacious. Shaping his course by personal observation as he moved over the field, and pursuing it with earnestness and singleness of purpose, within a short month he had won a complete mastership of the situation. He could maintain the recognition of his authority only by the means with which he had won it—by being, as he himself had expressed it, the “governor of the whole people of Kansas,” making no official discrimination between contending parties whether from the North or from the South. It was with supreme effort that the most formidable of the hordes from Missouri had been dispersed. They had disregarded an imperative order, though served by his adjutant general, who had been compelled by their contumacy to send in haste for his chief, and afterward write to him: “I consider it fortunate for myself that you came to the camp; for you must be convinced, from what you saw during your stay, of the utter impossibility to execute your commands.” They had yielded and were yet held back on his personal assurance that “Lane’s army of the North” should be treated in the same way. But though he was triumphant, he stood almost alone. The whole array of territorial officials, who had been balked in their plans for the extinction of the Free-state party on the eve of execution, had submitted to be reversed under constraint, and stood glowering at their adversary, watching every step for an occasion to trip him. It was when thus surrounded that he records: “Unless I am more fully sustained hereafter by the civil authorities, and serious difficulties and disturbances continue to agitate the territory, my only recourse will be to martial law, which I must needs proclaim and enforce.”

As an impartial arbiter between two belligerent parties, and under the espionage of an exacting authority above him, to have shown marked favoritism to a northern company would have cost him his official head, as proven by the fate of former governors, and verified afterward in his own case and in that of two of his successors.

Still more to aggravate the situation, rumors, like snowflakes from the north, and reports, official and from “express riders,” “spies,” “footmen” and “horsemen,” entering by the sinister route singly and in squads, of a formidable invasion from the North, had stirred the troops under the judicious Colonel Cooke and the imperturbable Commanding General Smith into unwonted activity, giving pause to the governor while congratulating himself on the success of his policy. The seriousness with which the situation was viewed at the time by the authorities is faintly outlined in Geary’s executive minutes. The terror inspired by the rumors among the proslavery remnant in the territory and the vengeful spirit stirred anew on the border are the subjects of many legends.

First came a report, deemed worthy of attention by Colonel Cooke, that Lane, who had left the territory on hearing of the governor’s proclamation, designed returning with 500 men. Corroborating this came to General Smith and the governor a letter from a “respectable citizen of

Chicago," significantly indorsed by the postmaster at Westport, stating that 1,000 armed men were about to start from Chicago to help Lane at Lawrence, and that they expected to enter Kansas through Iowa and Nebraska. Evidently this was an exaggerated report of my operations.

Fast upon this came to the governor "reliable information that James H. Lane, with a large armed force, with three pieces of cannon, is now about to invade the territory, he having contracted with the ferryman at Nebraska City for the transit of 600 or 700 men across the Missouri river." This information brought an order to Colonel Cooke, authorizing him, "with such force as you may deem necessary, to cause the said James H. Lane to be arrested, if he be found within the limits of this territory, and to capture his cannon and any other munitions of war, together with any armed body of men entering this territory, . . . and to bring the said James H. Lane, with his cannon and munitions of war, together with any other prisoners, before me at this place, to be dealt with according to law."<sup>54</sup>

With the regularity of the sun the dispatches came flowing in upon the governor. One from General Smith, confirming him in the opinion that Redpath's company of 130 men which had been permitted to pass by the marshal as peaceable emigrants and had left a cannon concealed by the way, was the advance guard of "Lane's army," was responded to by a requisition upon Colonel Cooke to employ every means to capture Lane, and the hope expressed that he would lose no time in carrying out the order, and if possible secure the principal object.

The outcome of all this flurry was that Colonel Cooke at once set out "for the northern boundary with about 364 rank and file—artillery, sabers and muskets—taking one company of infantry," making, with four squadrons already at the north under Colonel Johnston, "about 500 effective troops—none too large a force to meet 600 or 700 invaders with a battery."

The deep seriousness with which the situation was regarded by the commanding general is shown by a final order issued on October 5 by his adjutant, F. J. Porter:

"The general directs you not to trust to the appearance and professions of parties claiming to be peaceable, *bona fide* emigrants, but, by the use of spies and other means which may be at your disposal, to procure all possible information of their character and intentions, and by a careful examination to insure yourself that they form no part of organized armed bodies or of Lane's men. Should they enter the territory with cannon, or form any portion of Lane's command, you will not believe their professions, but take them prisoners and disarm them."<sup>55</sup>

It was under such conditions, and guided by the "exigencies of affairs as they were presented to him on the spot," that Colonel Cooke, construing the instructions of Governor Geary, placed our company under arrest. As Marshal Preston and others making the arrest were very much staggered by the governor's letter, which was produced, Colonel Cooke proposed to take the party under surveillance, instead of as prisoners, before the governor. I felt that this was the more honorable treatment, but

54. "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 4, p. 513-14.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 508.

the company, on being consulted, preferred to go as prisoners, as thus the governor would be compelled to furnish subsistence as well as transportation to the weary and footsore. The three days' march, however, under Major Sibley, who was assigned to escort us, was more under surveillance than as prisoners. In his report of the march he says:

"I imposed no restraint upon them whatever along the route. Their sick and footsore (many of them driven from their own wagons) were permitted to ride in mine. They were assisted in crossing streams and were permitted to select their own camp grounds, within reasonable distance of mine. . . . They were never for one moment made to feel the restraint of military discipline, but were, on the contrary, relieved from the onerous duty and necessity of nightly guards, and assisted rather than retarded in their journey."

Though biased by strong southern sympathy, which later carried him over into the rebellion, where he won a high rank, Major Sibley had a correct apprehension of the situation of our company, as in the same report he says:

"In view of the excitement which prevailed in the territory at the probable moment of its organization, invasion and war was its original intent. Learning, however, as they approached the line, the true state of affairs (the happy results of a few weeks of vigorous administration of justice), that instead of war, peace and quiet and protection reigned throughout the land, their character changed. The arms . . . were never unpacked. . . ." 56

It is true, it was not with grace that the company submitted to arrest, and demanded their rights as prisoners to subsistence and transportation, with at the same time the privileges of volunteers. It is also true that at first they sought to relieve their feeling of discomfiture by cavilling, and by constantly chaffing the troops as they came in contact with them. But the patient forbearance and the kindly consideration that marked the regular army throughout the Kansas troubles soon won for it a regard that made us all feel more comrades than prisoners. Major Sibley reported that "with a general understanding and a better acquaintance with the commanders every disposition to cavil ceased."

Seemingly to make amends for our abrupt treatment by army officers, Geary did not wait to have us turned over to him at Lecompton, which would indeed have been a humiliation, but took the trouble to meet us a day in advance at our camp opposite Topeka. Here he greeted us most cordially, expressing the hope that we had not been discommoded by the action of the marshal, avowing himself greatly pleased with our advent, and appreciatively referred to the contradictory situations through which we had passed. It was with no little show of pride that he dwelt upon the changed condition of affairs brought about by himself. He invited us to his rooms across the river in Topeka, and over a basket of champagne discussed the new condition of affairs in Kansas and the political situation as it affected him personally. Here he displayed traits of character that we had not looked for, but perceived with the more gratification in contrast to all we had seen of Kansas governors. His whole official course had shown him to be prompt, firm and imperious; now he

was conciliatory, trustful and sympathetic. He expressed himself in hearty sympathy with our motives in the measures we had taken for the relief and defense of the free-state settlers, and recognized the movement as introducing an element that would give stability to his administration. As to the arms that had been taken from us, he promised that they should be restored as soon as the delicate situation in which he was placed would permit. Also to save himself from charge of undue favoritism, he expressed a wish that we would restrain our enthusiasm and proceed with as little demonstration as possible.<sup>57</sup>

In proof of the sincerity of his promise I obtained a two-horse load of these arms from him at Lecompton a few weeks later. As no occasion for the use of them occurred again during his administration, the remainder were handed over to his successors. These, with the exception of the revolvers and some other accouterments which seem to have been dissipated by the Lecompton officials, I obtained from Governor Denver by distraint, the account of which will appear a little later on.

In continuing our march from Topeka we obeyed the injunction of Geary until reaching the vicinity of Lawrence. There a halt was made, the guns that had escaped the search of the march were unpacked, the flags unfurled, the concealed fifes and drums brought out, and the military organization of which we had divested ourselves on the Nebraska line was resumed. Thus reorganized and equipped we closed our long march through Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas, to the notes of the "spirit-

57. It is interesting here to compare Governor Geary's report, made to Secretary of State W. L. Marcy, of his meeting with the party:

"Being apprised of the time at which they would probably arrive at Topeka, I forwarded orders for their detention on the northern side of the river near that place, where, as I promised, I met them on the morning of the 14th instant.

"I found them precisely as they had been represented to me in official reports; and whilst I felt disposed and anxious to extend to them all the leniency I could consistent with propriety, duty and justice, I determined at the same time to enforce in their case, as well as that of every similar organization, the spirit and intent of my proclamation of the 11th instant, which commands 'all bodies of men, combined, armed and equipped with munitions of war, without authority of the government, instantly to disband or quit the territory, as they will answer the contrary at their peril.' This I had done but a short time previous with a smaller body, who entered Kansas as this had done, from an entirely different quarter, and who, upon learning my purpose, not only submitted willingly to be searched, but by my order, without a murmur, and even with cheerfulness, disbanded and dispersed.

"I addressed these people in their encampment in regard to the present condition of the territory, the suspicious position they occupied, and the reprehensible attitude they had assumed. I reminded them that there was no possible necessity or excuse for the existence of large armed combinations at present in this territory. Everything was quiet and peaceful, and the very appearance of such an unauthorized and injudicious array as they presented, while it could do no possible good, was only calculated, if it was not intended, to spread anew distrust and consternation through the territory, and rekindle the fires of discord and strife that had swept over the land, ravaging and desolating everything that lay in their destructive way.

"Their apology for their evident and undeniable disregard to my proclamation, though somewhat plausible, was far from being satisfactory. They had made their arrangements, they said, to emigrate to Kansas at a time when the territory was not only disturbed by antagonistic political parties, armed for each other's destruction, but when numerous bands of marauders, whose business was plunder and assassination, infested all the highways, rendering travel extremely hazardous, even though every possible means for self-protection were employed.

"This excuse loses all its pertinency when it is understood that before the party crossed the territorial line they were apprised, through a deputation that had visited me, that the condition of things above described had ceased to exist, and that such was the true state of affairs, that any persons could then travel the route they proposed taking without molestation or the slightest cause for apprehension. I informed them, through their messengers, that I heartily welcomed all immigrants from every section of the Union, who came with peaceful attitude and apparently good intentions, and that to all such I would afford ample protection; while, on the other hand, I assured them that I would positively enforce my proclamation and suffer no party of men, no matter whence they came or what their political bias, to enter and travel through the territory with hostile or warlike appearance, to

stirring drum and ear-piercing fife," and under the flag that henceforth should be our protection entered Lawrence amid the enthusiastic cheers of the populace. It was a most happy termination of an expedition that had been enlisted for defense with almost a certainty of conflict. It was an equally happy condition that we found in Kansas contrasted with what it had been when our journey was undertaken.

An incident that occurred on our approaching Lawrence shows the nervous tension that existed among the army officers. A company under command of Major Samuel Woods had been stationed near Lawrence "to protect the returning inhabitants of Franklin"—some of whom had left on the assault of that town in August—and to repress "the ingress and egress from Lawrence of armed bodies of men." The music of the fife and drum had caught the major's ear, and seeing our banners flying and our martial array as we came marching down Mount Oread, he came dashing up to us in a state of great trepidation, evidently imagining the dreaded "Army of the North" had flanked the army of observation. It was only after an anxious review of our columns that he became satisfied that we were on dress parade and not on the warpath.

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the terror of peaceable citizens and the danger of renewing the disgraceful and alarming scenes through which we had recently passed. It was quite evident that this party did thus enter the territory, in defiance not only of my proclamation, but my own verbal cautions; and I, therefore, fully approve of the action taken by Colonel Cooke, Major Sibley and the deputy marshal, as well as all the officers of the army who assisted in their detention, search and guard.

"After showing them the necessity of so doing, I insisted upon the immediate disbandment of this combination, which was agreed to with great alacrity. The majority of the men were evidently gratified to learn that they had been deceived in relation to Kansas affairs, and that peace and quiet, instead of strife and contention, were reigning here.

"My remarks, which were listened to with marked attention, were received with frequent demonstrations of approbation, and at their close the organization was broken up, its members dispersing in various directions. After they had been dismissed from custody, and the fact was announced to them by Major Sibley, they testified their thankfulness for his kind treatment towards them during the time he held them under arrest by giving him three hearty and enthusiastic cheers.

"In concluding this hastily written letter, I must express my sincere regrets that societies exist in some of the states whose object is to fit out such parties as the one herein described and send them to this territory, to their own injury and the destruction of the general welfare of the country. Very many persons are induced to come out here under flattering promises which are never fulfilled, and having neither money to purchase food or clothing, nor trades or occupations at which to earn an honest livelihood, are driven to the necessity of becoming either paupers or thieves; and such are the unfortunate men who have aided materially in filling up the measure of crimes that have so seriously affected the prosperity of Kansas. It is high time that this fact should be clearly and generally understood. This territory, at the present season of the year, and especially under existing circumstances, offers no inducements for the immigration of the poor tradesman or laborer. The country is overrun with hundreds who are unable to obtain employment, who live upon charity, and who are exposed to all the evils of privation, destitution and want."—"Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 4, p. 584 *et seq.*

## CHAPTER XIX

### GOVERNOR GEARY.

THE seven weeks of my absence from Lawrence had brought a change of conditions throughout the territory. Events of great import to Kansas, and indeed to the whole country, had been crowding upon each other.

Governor Geary's first move in the pacification of Kansas had been imperious and repressive. The dispersion of the armed forces being accomplished, his policy became trustful and conciliatory. And as a bond of assurance, Col. Sam Walker, the most notable representative of the aggressive element of the Free-state party, and Colonel Titus, the truest exponent and embodiment of border ruffianism, who in the course of their respective raids had burned each other's houses, were brought to a pacific meeting by the governor in his office. "Mutual concessions were made and pledges of friendship passed," as Geary has recorded, with the result that both were enlisted in the service of the administration—Walker as captain of a company of militia to sustain the governor in his method of pacification, and Titus as special aide on the governor's staff, with the "rank, pay and emoluments of colonel." The governor also put other turbulent spirits of the Proslavery party under bond by enlisting them in the reorganized militia. In the adoption of this method of conciliation his sagacity was fully vindicated by the peaceful results; and his trust in the most noted of them—Colonel Titus—was justified by faithful service in conflict with the leaders of his own party, in the matter of the collision between the governor and Chief Justice Lecompte over the Hays affair.

As this incident brings out most fully Geary's distinguishing traits, the vigor with which he wielded his authority, and his disregard of the proslavery construction of the law where crime was to be brought to punishment, its recital here is his best eulogy.

David C. Buffum was a most inoffensive free-state man, living on the California road some six miles west of Lawrence. He had been badly disabled the previous winter while engaged in the defense of Lawrence by the accidental discharge of a gun, which tore away a large section of the muscle of one of his thighs. On the disbanding of Reid's army by the governor at Franklin, a squad of six men belonging to Col. J. J. Clarkson's Kickapoo Rangers, on their return homeward by way of Lecompton halted by the field where Buffum was at work and seized his team. On his pleading with them to be allowed to retain his only means of support, they shot him and rode off with his horse. Governor Geary, as he relates in his executive minutes, "coming along the road almost immediately afterward, in company with Judge Cato, his attention was called to the dying man. He found him in a dying condition, suffering the greatest



agony and weltering in his gore. He said: 'I am about to die and enter the presence of my God. This is a cold-blooded murder; he shot me because I asked him not to take away my horse.' The governor directed Judge Cato to receive his dying declarations, which he kindly did; that the dying man, writhing in mortal agony, turned his eyes to him and most imploringly entreated his kindness. The governor then remarked that the dying man's look and entreaty made a deep and lasting impression upon him, so much so that he solemnly vowed that the horrid crime should be expiated in the punishment of the murderer."

This murderer was Charles Hays. On complaint of the governor on arriving at Lecompton, a warrant was immediately obtained for his arrest and placed in the hands of United States Marshal Donalson. The warrant not being returned within the time considered sufficient for its service, the impatient governor called the marshal to account for the matter. The writ, not being of the political complexion that he was accustomed to execute, Donalson explained his method of how not to do a thing that he did not wish to do but could not refuse to do. He had intrusted the business to his deputy, Samuel J. Cramer. Cramer had not been able to identify the culprit; the "writ" was vague and indefinite, no names being mentioned or particular descriptions given. But that when he returned to Leavenworth, which he would do as soon as "pressing business" would permit, he would "be able to ferret out" the murderer. These hesitating and dilatory movements convinced the governor that Hays was to be permitted to escape, and he at once offered a reward of \$500 for his arrest and conviction. What legal process could not do, a promise to pay did. Hays was arrested and an indictment found against him by the grand jury for murder in the first degree. The indictment, however, proved as ineffective in bringing the culprit to punishment as did the writ to the marshal. The governor could start the mill and furnish the grist, but he had no power to put it into the hopper. Judge Lecompte was conveniently at hand, and discharged Hays on worthless bail, flatly in conflict with the statute. The gross partisanship with which Lecompte prostituted his judicial power is aggravated in this case by the fact that he had refused bail to Hickory Point prisoners before indictment for an offense which on trial was held to be only manslaughter in a conflict between two armed bodies; whereas this was a case of aggravated murder, with indictment found and without doubt as to the identity of the culprit. In his executive minutes Geary denounces this act of Lecompte as "a judicial outrage without precedent; as highly discourteous to himself, as he had been the means of arresting Hays; . . . that the act was greatly calculated to endanger the public peace and to destroy the entire influence of the policy he was laboring day and night to inaugurate here, and to bring the court and the judiciary into entire contempt; that he would treat the decision of Judge Lecompte as a nullity and proceed, upon the indictment for murder, to rearrest Hays as if he had merely escaped. . . ." The execution of the warrant, however, was refused by Marshal Donalson, assigning the reasons that he was unwilling to arrogate to himself the power to contravene or set aside the acts of a court of justice; that it would be in violation of his official oath; and that he would lay himself liable to a suit of damage,

which might involve and ruin his securities. On the governor's insistence, the marshal's tender conscience and thoughtful concern about the ruin of his securities constrained him to tender his resignation.

Not to be balked in his determination to bring Hays to justice, the governor immediately made out a duplicate warrant and placed it in the hands of his special aide, Col. H. T. Titus, with directions to take a file of men and execute it without delay. This quondam border ruffian, with no tender conscience to prick him or uneasy bondsmen to restrain, and only bound to the governor by his trustful treatment of him, was able, on the second day after receiving it, to return the warrant with the culprit, whom he had found at his home some fifty miles distant. But Judge Lecompte again interposed and released the prisoner during the absence of the governor. However, though he won the game, it was at the expense of his office, as his act furnished a reason for his removal which the President could not ignore, with Geary urgently pressing it.

In his policy of pacification it was not the United States marshal and supreme judge alone that the governor had to contend with. The legislative assembly by its origin was the legalized expression of border-ruffian methods, charged with the invention of devices for the suppression of all opposition to slavery. From their private stations its members had been compelled to look on and see their contrivances smashed and their schemes thwarted on the eve of accomplishment by an imperious governor. But convened as a legislature they were supreme; and while they were powerless to execute their own devices, they could tie the hands of the governor and hamper him in the execution of just laws.

Scarcely had they got the legislative machinery in running order when they squared themselves for a conflict with the governor by stepping beyond their jurisdiction and impertinently requesting him to furnish his reasons for not commissioning W. T. Sherrard as sheriff of Douglas county. Now this same Sherrard was the degenerate scion of a respectable Virginia family, a drunken, brawling and dangerous rowdy, too tenacious to be sloughed off in the renovation by Geary, but lingering behind his comrades and finding lodgment around Lecompton, where he obtained an appointment, of doubtful legality, from the county board as successor to Sheriff Jones. The challenge to combat was met by the governor promptly and squarely and with no uncertain tone of defiance. While denying their authority to call him to account, he projected upon them crushing reasons for his refusal to issue the commission: That he had been "informed by many respectable gentlemen, among whom were those of the county tribunal from which he derived his appointment, that Mr. Sherrard had been engaged in several drunken broils, fighting and shooting at persons with pistols, and threatening others. I have since been informed that these facts are notorious to the citizens of the place and can easily be substantiated by proof. . . . But it is my desire to be distinctly understood that I will commission no one laboring under such charges as would impair, if not entirely destroy, his usefulness, or whose passions and habits would render him unfit for the proper discharge of his duties or which might in any manner endanger the peace of the territory."

To reinforce the projectile that he hurled among them, he closed his

message with the information that he was instructed from the source from which he derived his appointment to pursue this course of policy.

The house, with a reprimand to the governor for his refusal to obey the "imperative and unequivocal declaration of the law as to his duty" in the premises, aimed at him a counter-blow by the passage of "An act to declare valid the official acts of W. T. Sherrard, and to make valid his appointment to the office of sheriff of Douglas county," as a wholesome check upon the executive authority, and that the laws might be enforced according to the act of Congress and, more especially, of the legislative assembly. The council, more sedate and judicial, containing a number of the ablest lawyers of the territory, while protesting against the reasons assigned, dodged the governor's barbed missile and backed out of the conflict by a side opening that they had discovered in the nonexistence of the county board that made the appointment—its attempt at self-propagation being without law, two of its three members having left the territory—and declined to pass the bill.

This was a third and final defeat for Sherrard. Recommended by Jones as his fitting successor, appointed by a pliant county board, he had been refused a commission by the governor on the ground of character; denied a writ of mandamus by the judge of misrule—Lecompte; and failed of installation by a willing legislature for want of legal standing through the discovery that Jones had resigned to persons not qualified to receive his resignation. The haughty indignation with which he at first treated the governor became malice, and he plotted a murderous revenge.

Failing in their attempt to reinstate the destructive agencies in authority, the legislature proceeded to loosen the slight legal bonds that secured criminals under prosecution, by an act declaring that, "The district court, or any judge thereof in vacation, shall have power and authority to admit to bail any prisoner on charge or under indictment for any crime or offense of any character whatever, whether such crime or offense shall have been heretofore bailable or not; such court or judge, on every such application for bail, exercising a sound discretion in the premises." The legal interpretation of "sound discretion" was plainly if not authoritatively indicated, making its exercise mandatory rather than discretionary, in a concurrent resolution sent to the president requesting the reinstatement of Lecompte, setting forth:

"That the interference of the executive of the territory of Kansas with the proceedings of the United States judge, Samuel D. Lecompte, whilst engaged in the discharge of his judicial functions in the case of Charles Hays, can only be regarded by right-minded and sober-thinking men as an anti-republican and despotic assumption of power, without a parallel in the history of our government, and must be viewed with the most unqualified censure.

"That a new era has been installed in the history of our country, when any judicial officer, to say nothing of so honest, high-minded and capable a functionary as Hon. Samuel D. Lecompte, late chief justice of the United States court for the territory of Kansas, is removed merely because his judicial decisions are at variance with the private opinions of the executive of Kansas; and that it is to be sincerely regretted that President Pierce, most of whose public acts have been characterized by wisdom and fairness, should have been led into so serious an indiscretion as the arbitrary removal of so trustworthy and faithful a judge, whose

only fault was that he dared to preserve the judiciary unsullied from the encroachments of an usurping executive."

Such expressions at this day would be regarded as a competitive trial of bombast, if not of sarcasm. But in the infatuation of that time, when the most serious issues seemed to hang on every movement, with both parties in the conflict, words lagged behind thoughts and feelings.

Against this legislative condonement of assassination the governor's veto, enforced by all the arguments applicable to the case, was powerless. The bill was passed over his veto. But with the growing and confident strength of the Free-state party, greatly reinforced and animated by the multitudes, well fortified with capital, that had been attracted to Kansas by the November sales of Indian trust lands at Leavenworth, and the slinking into obscurity of the members of the legislature on their dissolution, the courts were left without the sympathetic mob that had heretofore supported and controlled them. The vicious measures of the legislature became inoperative and were treated with derision rather than protest, as they afforded complete justification of the Free-state party in repudiating the whole bogus code of laws.

So far the conflict between the governor and the legislature had been on matters of administration. Now was sprung a scheme of political strategy, evidently directed from Washington, by which it was hoped to recover by legerdemain what had been lost in open physical conflict. It was the formation of a state government, with application for admission into the Union. The House of Representatives at Washington that had passed the Topeka constitution had been won back by the opposition, and the Federal government in all its branches was solid and counted as favorable to such a scheme. That assurances of favorable action were given from the beginning by those high in authority became apparent in the later stages of the movement.

Contemptible as the authority of the legislature was, it held in its hands with supreme control the whole machinery for installing the state government; had acquired skill in its use, and could turn out, completed, such a state organization as would be acceptable to the powers at Washington. The scheme as it was launched by the legislature omitted any provision for the submission of the constitution for decision by the people; its authors rightly judging that a submission would be fatal, regardless of the character of the instrument, as contaminated by its origin. For this omission the measure met the governor's veto, as also for the reasons that the territory was "burdened with heavy liabilities, without titles to our lands, our public buildings unfinished; . . . without money even to pay the expenses of a convention; and just emerging from the disastrous effects of a most bitter civil feud, it seems unwise for a few thousand people, scarcely sufficient to make a good county, to discard the protecting and fostering care of a government ready to assist us. . . ."

But the governor again proved powerless with his veto. The power above the legislature had issued the mandate, and the convention that gave life and form to the notorious Lecompton constitution was brought into existence.

## CHAPTER XX.

### SHERRARD.

**T**O RETURN to the case of Sherrard. Though Geary by his firmness had suppressed all refractory combinations, he had not yet been able to extinguish that attendant of lawless government—individual ruffianism. The gathering of the legislature, like the raking together of embers, had kindled anew the smouldering elements of ruffianly violence. Heaped together in their legislative halls, friction with Governor Geary over the Sherrard appointment set them aflame. While their judicial reports on the subject were tempered with coolness, the individual members fumed with sulphurous vapors that burst into lurid flames. “A d——d despot”; a “usurper, a monster and a tyrant”; “assuming arbitrary power from which an autocrat of Russia would have shrunk dismayed”; “with conduct more atrocious and cruel than Nero or Caligula,” were phrases in which the superheated members vied with each other in exhausting the vocabulary of invectives against the governor. Raised thus to a prominence that challenged desperate action, with such flames burning around his vicious instincts and setting aglow the fires of hell within him, Sherrard went out meditating the reinstatement of Woodson by the assassination of Geary.

The entire official household of the governor were embraced in his design. He assaulted the governor’s clerk and brother-in-law, John A. W. Jones, a weak and unarmed man, incapable of defending himself.

“Failing to create a disturbance by this outrage, another, equally unprovoked, was attempted on the following day. Meeting the governor’s private secretary, who was just recovering from a protracted indisposition, and was still quite feeble, Sherrard attempted to provoke a quarrel with him, and not succeeding by the use of offensive words, pushed him from him with one hand, at the same time striking him upon the face with the other, having his pistol ready, as usual, for use in case of resistance or retaliation.”<sup>58</sup>

His next attempt was against the governor himself, and as if to give it the highest sanction, at the seat of legislation. And to his character of desperado he added that of a vile blackguard. As in this affair, with its results, is shown the border ruffian in his full development—a type which has passed away—and that a truthful description may not be taken for partisan exaggeration, the account of the affair is taken from the governor’s records.

The governor with Dr. John H. Gihon, his secretary, and Richard McAllister, an attaché of his office, in a round of visiting the departments of the government, “had taken their seats in the house, when Sherrard, observing them, suddenly arose and left the hall. His appearance and manner were so peculiar as to elicit special notice. . . .

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58. “Kansas Historical Collections,” vol. 4, p. 709.

"After remaining some half an hour or more, the governor left the hall, his companions immediately following. As he was passing from the hall of the house into the anteroom, and while yet in the door, he was accosted with opprobrious epithets by Sherrard, who stood in the anteroom, and who had after leaving the hall prepared himself with two navy revolvers and a large bowie knife, which he wore conspicuously in a belt on the outside of all of his clothing. His hand was upon the handle of a pistol, in order that upon the shadow of a pretense he might be enabled instantly to use it. The governor passed on as though unconscious of his presence. Mr. McAllister immediately succeeded him, and as Sherrard followed the governor towards the outer door, interposed himself between them, thus preventing the accomplishment of an evidently preconcerted plan for assassination. The governor and Mr. McAllister then reached the platform of a flight of stairs upon the outside of the building, leading to the ground, the legislative hall being in the second story. As they descended Doctor Gihon was passing through the anteroom, and observing Sherrard, who, enraged at being frustrated, was then on the platform spitting after the governor and muttering oaths, defiance and threats, of all of which the governor was unconscious, as he was then some distance ahead.

"When the governor's party all reached the foot of the steps, Sherrard followed, still grasping his pistol and uttering offensive epithets, . . . and in a few moments after was in close conversation with several prominent men of the place, boasting of what he had done, and of more than he actually did, and expressing his regrets that no provocation could be forced from the governor sufficient to enable him (Sherrard) with a show of propriety or palliation, to effect his purpose. In this attempt upon the governor it has since been ascertained that several other persons were in complicity with Sherrard."<sup>59</sup>

In the afternoon of the same day a resolution condemning this outrage was introduced in the house, but it met with such opposition that it was withdrawn. It is due to the council, which contained a few fair-minded members, to say that while declining to debar Sherrard from the hall, it passed a resolution condemning and discountenancing the act of Sherrard.<sup>60</sup> Gen. Wm. P. Richardson, a member of the council, who died a few days before its adjournment, in the last letter he wrote has left on record his feeling of mortification with the house for its action, and has corroborated the account of the meeting as recorded by Geary. He says:

"Sherrard cursed him. The governor paid no attention to him, but walked on, when Sherrard spit on his back as often as twice—so say the two gentlemen who were with him at the time. I have no idea that Governor Geary knew the extent of the insult until the persons who were with him informed him."

The feeling throughout the country was not divided. This grossest indignity ever offered a governor aroused a sympathy for him, even among those who had looked upon his course with disapproval and distrust, and called out proffers of protection for him should he desire it. Foremost among them were the people of Big Springs, who expressed their feelings in this resolution:

"That we regard the late insult upon the person of the governor, its indorsement by the house, and the continued indignities heaped upon him . . . by the legislature, as well as by certain individuals, as most gross and ruffianly. . . .

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59. *Ibid.*, p. 708.

60. *Council Journal, Kansas Territory, 1857*, pp. 164-168.

"That we tender to Governor Geary our sympathies as well as our support and coöperation, and pledge him, to the extent of our power, all the assistance in this emergency that he may ask of us, feeling very confident that the honest heart and powerful arm of every freeman in Kansas will be ready at once to respond most cheerfully to these our sentiments." <sup>61</sup>

There was yet to be a conflict of force. The malign spirit that had been called back to life by the evocations of the legislature would not be allayed except with blood.

The impulse that found expression in resolutions of sympathy and assurances of support for the governor, from every community where the indignity offered the executive was known, had its culmination at a meeting called at Lecompton for a like purpose. It was a bold and hazardous movement under the conditions prevailing. Suspicions that the administration at Washington was no longer upholding the governor were becoming certainties. The whole array of Federal officials, that in the stress of his administration had yielded to his sway, were now clamorous in their opposition. A delegation of the most active and virulent of them, Surveyor General Calhoun, Indian Agent Clarke and Captain Emory, were at Washington seeking to undermine him. Rumors of intended removal were afloat. Troops that had been furnished him without question or stint heretofore at every call were now denied him when demanded for his personal safety.

He was an emergency governor, having been selected to tide the administration over a dangerous condition that had been safely passed in the election of Buchanan. Now that the danger was over, first intentions should govern and the South be permitted to regain what it claimed as its share of the common inheritance. Geary declined to bend himself to the changed conditions and became an obstruction to the scheme, to be gotten rid of.

Beneath the personal consideration in the appointment of Sherrard as sheriff was a much weightier one. The emoluments of the office were slight. Sherrard sought it as a legal covering for his turbulent energies. Scores of writs and indictments, multiplied at will, against free-state men—torches in the hand of an incendiary—that under Geary had been held in suspense, were in readiness to be served as soon as released from Geary's control. Sherrard had boasted that, as sheriff, within a week he would restore the border rule as it was before the advent of Geary. The qualities for which Geary refused to commission him were those that commended him to the legislature as a commander in the field in their scheme of restoration.

The Lecompton meeting was called in the closing days of the legislature, and was designed to crush the head of the serpent. It was attended by some 400 resolute men, friends and enemies of the governor. The enemies of Geary seized the advantage of location to control the organization and preëempt the floor with a boisterous denunciation of the governor. Resolutions were reported from the resolutions committee highly complimentary to the governor, indorsing his conduct and extending to him

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61. "Geary in Kansas," Gihon, 1857, p. 236; also, "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 4, p. 712.

aid and sympathy "in view of the recent personal assault upon our worthy executive, for an act done in his official capacity and fully justified by all the circumstances."

Scarcely had the reading of these resolutions been finished when Sherrard sprang up and shouted: "Any man who will dare to indorse these resolutions is a liar, a scoundrel and a coward!"

A voice, clear and firm, came from the center of the crowd: "I indorse them, and am neither a liar, a scoundrel nor a coward." The defiant speaker was Joseph Sheppard.

Sherrard instantly drew his revolver and emptied it at Sheppard as fast as he could fire. Three of the shots hit him; a fourth wounded another man. Sheppard promptly met the attack, but his caps failed to explode, when he clubbed his revolver and rushed upon his assailant before he could draw his second pistol. It was then a hand-to-hand fight with clubbed revolvers. "They were separated, and Sheppard was removed, severely, and it was then supposed mortally, wounded."

"No sooner was Sheppard taken off than Sherrard seized his other pistol and advanced, with finger on the trigger, toward John A. W. Jones, the young man whom he had assaulted a few days before, when Jones, perceiving his danger, also drew. Several shots were then simultaneously fired, and Sherrard fell, mortally wounded. . . . He died early on the following Saturday morning, and his remains were removed to Winchester, Va." <sup>62</sup>

With Sherrard the defiant spirit of border ruffianism was snuffed out. Yet there remained lurking about headquarters a cowardly spirit of assassination, prompting what it dared not perform, filling the lives of the governor and his supporters with more nervous dread than open hostilities.

Jones, for the killing of his murderous assailant, was threatened with lynching, which could not be accomplished openly. Then a temptingly significant rumor of \$500 offered for his assassination was set afloat, and on his delivering himself up, Judge Cato, declining to hear testimony in his justification, placed him under bonds of \$5,000. He escaped from the toils drawn around him by flight through Nebraska and Iowa.

Geary's position was becoming politically unendurable and personally dangerous. On realizing the purpose of Sherrard he had made an urgent call on General Smith for troops to defeat the plot for his assassination and the consequent restoration of a reign of terror such as prevailed at his advent into the territory. He was coldly informed that insults or probable breaches of the peace did not authorize the employment of troops. "Besides, all the forces here have been designated by the Secretary of War and are under orders for other service more distant, and even the companies near you will have to be recalled. . . . But even they are to be employed to *aid the civil authority* only in" certain contingencies. From the fact that Judge Cato and Sheriff Jones constituted the *civil authority* in this case, the utter helplessness of the governor will be realized.

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62. "Geary and Kansas," Gihon, 1857, p. 241 *et seq.* See, also, "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 5, p. 276.



To the stripping from him of his military support, which had been his compelling argument, was added the defection of Secretary Marcy, on whose trustful moral support he had implicitly relied.

The supreme act of his administration that raised him above the mere level of an executive was the cutting of the trammels of law for its own vindication in the rearrest of Hays—the official conflict between himself and Lecompte. In this he had been sustained by Marcy in the removal of Lecompte. But now a revision of the subject at the behest of the legislature brought a curt note from the Secretary containing a covert reprimand, requesting an explanation of “discrepancies” between the statements of Judge Lecompte and those in the official report of the governor. His reply could come only from one conscious of the rectitude of his purpose and the wisdom of his conduct. With dignified assurance that relieves it of insolence he replied:

“ . . . I have simply to state that ‘what I have written I have written,’ and I have nothing further to add, alter or amend on this subject. My executive minutes, faithfully chronicling my official actions and the policy which dictated them at the time they occurred, and my various dispatches to the government, contain but the simple truth, told without fear, favor or affection.<sup>63</sup>

Abandoned by the administration that he had saved from defeat, and left a prey to fears of lurking assassins, he could not wait the expiration of his set time. Pleading “an absence of a few days,” to Secretary Woodson on account of “gradually sinking health,” to obtain “rest and avoid so much conversation,” he set out from Lecompton under the cover of night, the 10th of March, with two revolvers girt about him, and accompanied by his devoted secretary, Doctor Gihon, reached the cabin of Colonel Walker and besought assistance in his flight. Colonel Walker carried him to Lawrence, where he spent the remainder of the night. Proceeding next day to Kansas City, he turned over his authority to Secretary Woodson, and taking passage aboard the *A. B. Chambers* down the Missouri, issued a vindictory farewell address.

But the humiliation of his exit was the stepping stone to a higher career and to national fame. By dissociating him from the baser element that dominated his party and brought it to disruption on the brink of the Rebellion, it opened a career in the army that led to his promotion as major general, and made him governor of the great state of Pennsylvania.

With the knowledge that the administration had again fallen into the hands of the implacable Woodson, a revulsive tremor spread over the territory, awakening to life the vengeful fires of hate and a stubborn spirit of resistance to the execution of the odious laws. To the broken fragments of the border forces the change of the administration gave promise of a return to former conditions, in which they had been given a free hand. To the subordinate officials it revived hopes of regaining their lost estate and vigorously plying their functions, backed by posses of dragoons, in hunting down “bandits” and executing the accumulated writs against free-state men, held in suspense by Geary. But the be-

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63. “Kansas Historical Collections,” vol. 4, p. 729.

lated doom that overtook "Dutch Henry" Sherman, of Pottawatomie Crossing notoriety, who had escaped the avenging saber of John Brown the previous season, was a paralytic stroke to the petty officials in southern Kansas. None could be found even to accept commissions to take the census required for the constitutional convention. In their helpless distress they called upon Woodson, verifying their petition by oath, setting forth that lawless bands of highwaymen and murderers infested the country, terrorizing peaceable citizens and rendering it utterly impossible to carry into effect the laws. It was in such conditions as this that Woodson reveled. The message was a stone dropped into a geyser, producing eruption. He rose to the height of the occasion and forthwith issued one of his flaming requisitions on General Smith for a company of dragoons for the purpose of bringing to the bar of justice the "roving desperadoes" and "predatory bands of assassins" that infested the southern counties. His eruptions were diurnal. The first was followed on the next day by another, imploring the retention of a company of dragoons which had been ordered withdrawn. These soldiers were needed for the purpose of executing a number of writs in the hands of United States deputy marshals for the arrest of notorious outlaws. But happily his malign energies failed of effect. The more sympathetic General Smith was absent, and Colonel Sumner, second in command, not taking kindly to his being superseded by Smith, declined to honor Woodson's requisition until instructed by his superior; and he suggested to the belligerent acting governor that it would be "safer to pause a little in military matters until we know the policy of the new administration." <sup>64</sup>

With this rebuff Woodson fell back into the quiet routine of his duties, and during the thirty days of his administration gave no further trouble, while the steady inflow of population was restoring confidence to the people, submerging the refractory element and sweeping out the incorrigible.

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64. Kansas Historical Collections, vol. 4, p. 744-755.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### WALKER AND THE LECOMPTON MOVEMENT.

THE tide of peaceful immigration that had been checked or diverted into other channels by the conflict in Kansas set in anew with increased volume on the establishing of peace and security by the firm and impartial administration of Governor Geary. It was a buoyant tide, this immigration, attracted by the magnetism of the issue that convulsed Kansas—a magnetism that drew out the true metal from the dross. They came as victors to divide the spoil, cheered by the prospects of a new-found Eden from which the serpent had been driven and where the billowy expanses, now robed in the beauties of spring, offered his own choice to every home-seeker.

The completion of the necessary land surveys, the public sales of trust lands which had begun in November and the opening of land offices for preëmption offered the first opportunities for secure investment of capital and of certain title to homes. As the spring of 1857 advanced the tide of immigration became a flood, covering all the most desirable lands in the eastern portion of the territory and peopling a multitude of extemporized towns. It was composed of a more substantial, practical, business class of citizens than the preceding immigration, repelled with their property interests till now by the turbulence and insecurity heretofore prevailing. By the law of emigration as well as from political conditions, this addition to the population came mainly from the Northern states. That coming from the slave states came to Kansas to get away from the contact with slavery. These added an overwhelming majority to the party of freedom. The substantial leaders of the slave party in the field had abandoned the contest, and, with a sagacity that gave them credit, divided their possessions, eagerly accepting northern capital and free-state population as the only practicable method of building up their towns, from which they had at first excluded all free-state men. General Stringfellow, the organizer and chief counsel of the slave party, struck hands with General Pomeroy, the representative of the Emigrant Aid Company, in an effort, through railroads and eastern capital, to make Atchison the metropolis of Kansas. The *Squatter Sovereign*, the most virulent of the border organs, edited by Dr. J. H. Stringfellow, a brother of the general, passed into the hands of the Free-state party and was edited by F. G. Adams and Robert McBratney, both of the radical anti-slavery type. Later the paper went under control of Pomeroy; the name was changed to *Freedom's Champion* and it was edited by the young John A. Martin, afterward governor of the state. Even Lane was invited into a like partnership in building up Doniphan. A dozen of the leading citizens of Lawrence were enlisted in an attempt to build up the intensely border-ruffian town of Delaware into a commercial rival of

Leavenworth. The slaveholding element that had dominated the Indian town of Wyandotte now courted the aid of the Eldridges, McAlpine, Roberts, Jenkins and Morrow, with other substantial free-state men, in an undertaking to make Wyandotte the metropolis of the West. Robinson and Simpson, also, with the prestige of the Emigrant Aid Company behind them, were given a hearty welcome from the opposite slave-ridden shore in building a city on the bluffs of the Missouri overlooking them at



EVANGELINE ELDRIDGE  
(Mrs. L. M. Mathews).

Quindaro. Indeed, every wood yard on the bank of the river, from White Cloud to Wyandotte, sprang up into an expectant city, where northern energy and enterprise were exploited as offering the surest road to fortune. Kansas City, seeking trade, was lavish in her attentions to northern immigrants, and Platte City hobnobbed with Lawrence over a projected railroad leading eastward and connecting with the Hannibal & St. Joe. Such was the condition of affairs when Walker and Stanton came upon the field—the very reverse of that which Geary had been met with.

It was a flowing tide of prosperity and good will, but in the plans of

the administration it was sweeping in the wrong direction and had submerged the institution of slavery, at least as a substantial reality, however it might exist as a legal fiction. Yet what the South desired was not so much the increase of area for the propagation of slavery as a weight in the scales to preserve her equilibrium, or rather her power of domination over the growing North, which she had exercised from the beginning of the government and was now on the verge of losing.

Deriving her power from an incongruous institution, the South was wayward, jealous and capricious, and dominated the government by muttered threats of dissolution of the Union as the penalty for denying her demands. The least that would appease her for the destruction of her plans for the establishment of slavery in Kansas through the interference of Geary was the creation of a state with its politics in accord with the administration. Such a state it had been plotted to give her, and accomplish by political strategy what had failed to be done by brute force. The Lecompton movement was the formulation of the plot. To run the blockade with this sinister craft, with adverse wind and tide, demanded no ordinary skill. Geary had attempted to scuttle it when launched, and it was left to the tender mercies of a mutinous crew when he was compelled to throw up his commission. Robert J. Walker, reckoned as the most astute politician of his day, rich in expedients, ingenious in methods, of mercurial temperament, impulsive disposition and assertive manners, was pressed into the service as pilot-governor by Buchanan. He was ably supported by Frederick P. Stanton, his complement in firm executive ability, solid legal acquirements, political experience, staid judicial temperament, and high integrity. Stanton was commissioned secretary and sent forward at once as acting governor to take control of affairs which were causing the President "great solicitude, occasioning great uneasiness everywhere, and threatening the most disastrous consequences," and in the conviction of the President, "fraught with imminent peril to the Union."

Was it distorted vision, or prescience through sympathy with the desperate purpose of the South, that revealed to Buchanan in the Kansas issue the foreshadow of the great Rebellion that grew out of the results four years later?

Walker accepted his commission with a vivid consciousness of being weighted with the destiny of the Union, and entered upon his mission with the vigorous earnestness of one charged with the rescue of a forlorn hope. If some of his official acts, with his ostentatious martial maneuvers, made him the subject of ridicule, it should be remembered that, like the knight of old, he was set to combat with a windmill. Geary's adversaries were bodily and tangible, amenable to dragoons and artillery. Walker was confronted with an intangible condition—a spirit of quiet, determined repudiation of the bogus laws; a condition that offered no target for his artillery nor opportunity for his dragoons. The Topeka state government was the *bête noir* that he had been specially charged to suppress, but he could find no occasion for combat. He had demanded as a condition of his acceptance the call of the Indian fighter, General Harney, from Florida, with 2,000 troops, "mostly dragoons," to support

his movements; and he stepped into the field with an air of command, to find the "pomp and circumstance of war" shrink to harmless maneuvers with fife and drum, and to himself deliver a proclamation that excited ridicule rather than respect.

Heretofore the removal of an official implied censure of his official conduct, with change of policy. But in the hasty supplanting of Woodson the President was very careful to guard against any such inference. Rather he indicated Woodson's method of discharging his duties as acceptable by assuring Walker that he had no dissatisfaction with the course of Mr. Woodson, but, on the contrary, "an approval of his course."

Drastic methods thus sanctioned in advance, with General Harney and 2,000 dragoons to execute them, made it evident that military pressure was to be brought to bear in expediting the Lecompton movement, and that the new appointees were under orders to push things.

It fell to Stanton, who had been sent forward in advance of Walker, to make the first announcement of the purposes of the administration. In his inaugural address issued from Lecompton on his arrival, he briefly set forth that the Federal government recognized the authority of the territorial organization; that there could be no other rightful authority exercised within the limits of Kansas, and he avowed his purpose to "proceed to the faithful and impartial execution of the laws of the territory by the use of all the means placed in my power." And he expressed the dominant purpose of his mission in the assurance that, "The government especially recognizes the territorial act which provides for . . . a constitution with a view to making application to Congress for admission as a state into the Union."

This, for general application, was received by the administration party with approbation. To the people of Lawrence, distrustful and critical of all administration schemes, he made a personal appeal, addressing a large, eager and expectant crowd assembled in the street from the porch of the Morrow House, commending to them the proposed state organization as the perfected fruit of popular sovereignty in an eloquent and learned discourse on that doctrine.

Now if there were any political doctrine, theoretical or applied, of which the people of Kansas were vain of their knowledge, it was this. They had learned it by laboratory methods, taken a postgraduate course and experimented with it. But they listened to its exposition by the acting governor with a patience and respect due to his official position and commanding manners, until near the close of his address, when a voice from the crowd called out:

"We know all we want to about squatter sovereignty; tell us what you are going to do about the *bogus laws*."

The voice was that of Robert Morrow, but it was evident from the impulsive demonstrations that it expressed the unanimous desire of the crowd. The bluntness and boldness of the question took the dignified secretary aback—in fact, very much flustered him—but it revealed to him in a flash the spirit that animated a dominating element that demanded to be reckoned with. It also aroused his combativeness. Recovering himself, he replied:

"The laws must be obeyed. It is my duty to enforce them."

The response to this was a determined "Never" that met the approval of the crowd.

"Then there will be war between us," replied the secretary, and, with a tone of resentment, "War to the knife and the knife to the hilt."

"Let it come," returned the crowd; "we are ready!"

This introduction of the secretary to the insurgent element that he had been instructed against, with its melodramatic close, gave each of the parties a better knowledge of the other than could have been obtained otherwise, and led to mutual respect—with Stanton, respect for the independence, determination and singleness of purpose of the people with whom he had to deal; with the people, respect for the candor, firmness and regard for official obligations which he showed. A further acquaintance ripened this respect into a mutual confidence which grew and strengthened until the day of Stanton's death. In the discharge of his administrative duties he did not follow in the footsteps of Woodson, as commended to him by Cass. Woodson had busied himself throwing the bogus laws as stumbling blocks before the free-state men; Stanton, while demanding respect for the territorial laws, was careful not to subject them to unnecessary strain. While firm, he was conciliatory. His purpose of conciliation was made plain in his inaugural address, and also recommended by him to the Federal administration. A passage from his address will honor his memory. He says:

"In order to promote peace and harmony and to secure the future repose of the people, there ought to be a general amnesty in reference to all those acts, on both sides, which grew out of the political contest and which were not corruptly and feloniously committed for personal gain and to gratify individual malignity. This measure . . . ought to be adopted generously, without any consideration of the origin of the difficulty, and without question as to the party which may be responsible for the wrong."<sup>65</sup>

On Walker's arrival, forty days later, the Lecompton movement was more fully elaborated and made the theme of his inaugural address, that ran through an hour of persuasive argument and glowing rhetoric, urging upon the people a state organization as the highest political beatitude. With the assurance of an ordained lawgiver, he outlined the measure that he proposed to push, and to devote his "whole time in addresses every day, to the people of every county of the territory, to insure its adoption," namely, a "state constitution very similar to some of the Southern states, securing the right to the slaves now in the territory . . . but prohibiting the introduction of any more slaves; excluding free negroes; enforcing by most stringent provisions the execution of the fugitive-slave law." So confident was he of bending all the refractory elements to his purpose, that in face of the fact that the Lecompton legislature, to insure against certain rejection, had omitted provision for the submission of the work of the convention to a vote of the people; that, with the pledge of the administration to sustain him, he became sponsor for its submission for acceptance or rejection at a fair election. But in so doing

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65. "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 5, p. 325.

he brought about his official downfall. Buchanan, absorbing the serpentine wisdom of the legislature, went back on him in the supreme crisis; and for the attempt to fulfill his pledge, administered the silent but effective rebuke of abandonment, to both Stanton and himself, forcing their resignation.

In the intensity of his zeal he had taken no note of the deep-seated resentment against everything emanating from Lecompton, that would yield to neither argument nor consideration. He was so confident of the acceptance of his measure by the recent emigrants, that with the proslavery remnant and conservative Democrats he counted upon a majority. But once admitted as a state, with political parties in their present relation, he saw, with prophetic vision, looming up before him a danger to the Union beyond control—as he described it, “The Grecian horse admitted within the walls of Troy.”

He had discovered that “a union of the free-state Democrats with the Republicans . . . would constitute an admitted and overwhelming majority.” Once in the Union the parties would align themselves on the slavery issue, and if the Democrats were not dissociated from the heterogeneous elements, Kansas would become a state “controlled by the treason and fanaticism of abolition”; would “elect an abolition state legislature, send two abolition senators to the senate of the United States, and a member of Congress entertaining similar sentiments”—a “most calamitous result, which, in my opinion, would soon seal the fate of the republic.” Only by dissociation of the Democratic element from the Free-state party, and its “complete union cemented with the Proslavery party,” could such a fearful disaster be averted. “Dissociating” and “cementing” were at once taken up as the burden of his mission, with all the earnestness and energy of one weighted with the destiny of the republic. What wonder if his nervous and mercurial temperament, disturbed by his nightmare vision, led him to Quixotic errantry and spectacular military operations that doomed his impetuous but honest and impartial administration to ridicule! Nevertheless his vision was true, but seen by him in a false light. His compromise could have only postponed the catastrophe that it was intended to avert. It was slavery, and not freedom, that was the dangerous explosive confined within the heart of the republic. To strengthen it was only to aggravate the disaster that must come from inevitable concussion in the progress of civilization.

The strong support of dragoons and artillery which Walker had insisted upon, and the government had furnished him under command of Harney, as essential to the success of his policy, evidently in anticipation of a collision with the Free-state party, demanded an excuse for their exercise to justify his excessive call.

Casting about for some cause of action, he sniffed, under the show of jubilant activity and prosperity, “great discontent” in the territory and “serious threats” of resisting the territorial laws, yet not beyond “strong hopes of peaceful settlement” by the soothing effect produced by his inaugural address. But a phantom appeared on the horizon—“a most alarming movement,” proceeding from the proposed assembling of a so-called legislature, with a view to the enactment of an entire code of laws,



any attempt to enforce which would be resisted by the government, and in the last resort by military force subject to his order. But the last resort was not reached. He advanced upon the assemblage, and in a three days' siege, lasting from the 6th to the 9th of June, assisted by Secretary Stanton and E. O. Perrin, a political orator from New York, beat the tom-tom and gong so vigorously that the insurgent spirit that possessed the assemblage was rendered harmless. And he was enabled to report to Washington, a month later, that had it not been for the position assumed in his inaugural address and emphatically repeated at Topeka, the territory would have been immediately involved in "a general and sanguinary civil war."

The ghostly apparition that had threatened inevitable and disastrous collision and renewal of civil war was only the quorumless Topeka legislature trying to get itself together to pass some acts necessary for its self-continuance. This done, it fell back into a state of doubtful expectancy, avoiding a conflict with Federal authority, and gave the governor no opportunity for testing his reagent for "dissociating" the conservative element from the Free-state party.

But scarcely had the insurgent phantom vanished from Topeka when it rose up with more threatening visage and promise of conflict in Lawrence. The occasion for which he had sought diligently, and not found, now thrust itself upon the governor, with promise of opportunity for dragoons and batteries and a hostile contact with Federal authority that would break the bonds between radicals and conservatives.

Certain conservative citizens had procured from the "bogus" legislature an act incorporating the city of Lawrence. The people, however, declined it—not with thanks, but with contempt. The rapid increase of population and extension of building, with the growth of business, made necessary some organization to provide for the varied necessities of the rapidly growing city. The Topeka legislature, always in a weakly condition, had after its faint session in June, lapsed into a state of inanition without providing for municipal governments. Under these conditions the only recourse was that which brought the Topeka government into existence—a resort to the process of spontaneous generation. The product of these conditions and influences was a fully developed "charter of the city of Lawrence," unanimously adopted at a mass meeting of the citizens held in front of the Morrow House (the site of the present Lawrence Bank building). On the 12th of July an election was held for the various officers provided for by the charter. James Blood was chosen mayor and S. W. Eldridge marshal. As intimations had been received that any attempt to enforce ordinances would be construed as an "overt act," these were chosen to stand the brunt of the threatened conflict.

Governor Walker, at Leecompton, construed the action into a challenge for battle, and instantly arose from a sick bed to the occasion. How he was affected by this imaginary speck of war is best told in his own language to Secretary Cass. He reports:

"Whilst suffering from debility, I received . . . a printed hand-bill [a notice of the city election] which I now inclose you, showing certain most alarming proceedings in the town of Lawrence. This was

accompanied by information that the people of that town were proceeding that day to elect a mayor, aldermen and other officers, and would immediately pass and enforce ordinances in defiance of the laws of the territory. . . . Although still suffering from debility, as the result of my illness, I considered the crisis so alarming as to require my immediate presence at Lawrence, where I proceeded in company with Mr. Secretary Stanton, and after spending several hours there ascertained to my entire satisfaction that all the facts communicated to me were true, and that this movement at Lawrence was the beginning of a plan, originating in that city, to organize insurrection throughout the territory. . . . Lawrence is the hotbed of all the abolition movements in this territory. It is the town established by the abolition societies of the East, and while there are respectable people there, it is filled by a considerable number of mercenaries, who are paid by the abolition societies to perpetuate and diffuse agitation throughout Kansas and prevent a peaceful settlement of this question. Having failed in inducing their own so-called Topeka state legislature to organize this insurrection, Lawrence has commenced it herself, and if not arrested the rebellion will extend throughout the territory." <sup>66</sup>

Hastening on to Leavenworth he held a council of war with General Harney and Major McCulloch—the latter of whom afterward acquired prominence as the rebel Gen. Ben McCulloch, in the Southwest. In such distinguished council was evolved the plan of campaign for the suppression of "this most wicked rebellion."

The conclusion was the improvement of the opportunity for the use of the dragoons, and the following requisition was issued:

"LEAVENWORTH, July 14, 1857.

"SIR—I have received authentic intelligence that a dangerous rebellion has occurred in the city of Lawrence, in this territory, involving an open defiance of the laws and the establishment of an insurgent government in that city.

"This movement, if not speedily arrested, I am also assured, will be extended throughout the territory, and must result in a renewal of civil war.

"It becomes, then, my painful duty, under my instructions from the President of the United States, to request you to furnish a regiment of dragoons to proceed at once to the immediate vicinage of Lawrence, to act as a *posse comitatus* in aid of the civil authorities in the due execution of the laws and for the preservation of the public peace. . . .

"Respectfully yours, R. J. WALKER,  
Governor of Kansas Territory.

"Brevet Brig. Gen. H. S. Harney,  
Commanding Troops in Kansas," etc.

This requisition was promptly honored by General Harney, who "directed Lieutenant Colonel Cooke of the Second dragoons to proceed with seven companies of his regiment, all the disposable force of that arm, to the vicinity of the city of Lawrence," to execute such orders as the governor might deem proper to give him. Supported by this military array; the redoubtable governor at once set out upon his expedition against the rebellious town.

Lawrence was in a state of happy activity; and the citizens, busily engaged in their usual avocations, unconscious of being in an "iniquitous rebellion" involving awful consequences, were unaware of approaching

danger till the governor's proclamation, which he had sent in advance, was received. This document adjured them "once more, to abandon these proceedings before you involve yourselves in the crime of treason and subject the people of the city of Lawrence to all the horrors and calamities of insurrection and civil war"; and closed with the prayer, "That the same overruling Providence who holds in His hands the destiny of our beloved country may now incline your hearts to peace and influence you to abandon this fatal enterprise."

On the arrival of the troops the town was invested, the cannon placed for effective service, Lawrence proclaimed under martial law, and sentries posted on the various approaches to inspect intruders. But the governor found to his chagrin that the treason and insurrection that he had proclaimed against the town were intangible and invisible—thin air, affording neither a target for his artillery nor a subject for a writ. He could only sit down, like Jonah under his gourd before Nineveh, and gloomily await events, attempting to relieve the absurdity of the situation by reporting every few days to Washington the success of his "precautionary measures" to stop the progress of the people of Lawrence in their dangerous career.

His desire to magnify the occasion for the use of the troops will be better appreciated when it is understood that General Harney with his command had been held back from the Utah expedition against the rebellious Mormons at his urgent request. He had so exaggerated the turbulent condition of Kansas that Buchanan had replied to him: "General Harney had been selected to command the expedition to Utah, but we must contrive to leave him with you, at least until you are out of the woods. Kansas is vastly more important at the present moment than Utah."

But under all this jealous watchfulness the Lawrence insurgents proceeded quietly in the discharge of such official duties as came before them. There being no friction to proclaim it, the motion of the corporate machinery was unobserved by the governor, except in a single instance, when, for the sake of ridiculing him, they made an ostentatious display of it in the abatement of a nuisance in the shape of a dead horse.

The investment of Lawrence subjected Walker to such sarcastic derision that he was glad of an excuse to raise the siege. It must have been with a feeling of relief that on the 1st of August he received two reports—one of an inroad of Cheyenne Indians above Fort Riley, and the other of "an alarming attitude" of Osages in southwestern Kansas—that gave him an occasion for calling off the troops; leaving only forty to hold the insurgent city in subjection.

The initiatory steps for the collection of a city tax, however, gave the governor an opportunity for another display of military authority. As he announced it to General Harney, "the insurgent government of Lawrence, under the erroneous opinion that the regular troops had all been ordered to Utah and would not be replaced by others, have passed a compulsory tax law, authorizing the seizure and sale of property, and exacting from their executive officers the enforcement of this ordinance under the solemnity of an oath."<sup>67</sup> Nothing less than Major Sherman's

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67. "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 5, p. 307.

battery with a company of artillery would suffice to suppress such an insurrection, and Lawrence was again placed under siege, more to the amusement than the terror of the citizens.

The result of the election which occurred a few days later, placing the Free-state party in control of the territorial legislature, convinced Walker of the impossibility of "dissociating" enough Free-state Democrats to effect his political scheme, and all further effort in that direction was abandoned.

The Proslavery party, from the beginning a minority of the actual residents of the territory, had depended on falsifying issues and on invasions from Missouri to control the elections, and had become adroit in political legerdemain. The increase of population adding largely to the free-state majority made invasion on a scale large enough to secure results impracticable, and manipulation of returns in populous precincts impossible. The bogus legislature, which had its origin in these methods, devised a cheaper and more effective plan for perpetuating its power, by arranging the legislative districts so that a sufficient number, containing a legislative majority, should border upon Missouri, fringed with convenient precincts and skeleton census. For the convenience of the auxiliary vote, and to secure opportunity for fraud, the Douglas county district was extended to the state line by attaching to it Johnson county, then almost wholly an Indian reserve with but few legal voters. And lest Missouri unaided should not be able to hold Douglas county down, there was added an infinite expanse of unknown country, described as "all that part of the territory of Kansas west of the counties of Wise, Butler and Hunter," that could be easily peopled with a phantom population.<sup>68</sup> The nearest point of this outlying territory was 150 miles distant from Douglas county, which made it all the more desirable as a residence for fictitious voters, should their services be required. Shawnee county was attached to the proslavery counties of Richardson, Wise, Davis and Breckinridge. So thoroughly had this gerrymandering been done, that of thirteen members of the council there were only three, and of the thirty-nine members of the house only ten, whose districts had not been stretched to the Missouri line. And further to facilitate fraud, *viva voce* had been substituted for the ballot, requiring nothing but a pen and memory of names to enable an election board to return the requisite number and kind of votes. The election boards were also the appointees of the bogus authorities. Besides, the apportionment was grossly unjust; the counties most easily controlled by fraud had undue representation. Nineteen, mostly interior counties, were given but three representatives, while the other fifteen were assigned thirty-six; twenty-two counties were given but three councilmen, while the other twelve were given ten. Added to all this was two days for voting given by the law, the opening of the polls on the second day being largely at the discretion of the board. The tedious checking of more than a score of candidates for each voter put it in their power to curtail the opposition vote and supplement their own.

This election machinery was the trap into which the Free-state party

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68. For this legislative apportionment see "Laws of Kansas Territory," 1857, p. 65; see, also, text and map, Andreas, "History of Kansas," 1883, p. 161.

had been invited to enter, but had wisely refused until they had exacted of the governor the most positive and repeated pledges of a fair election. Under these pledges, and from consciousness of their own strength to enforce their rights when unopposed by hostile authority, the free-state men, under a thorough organization, entered eagerly into the election. The polls were watched closely against fraudulent voting, and the full strength of the party brought out, with the result that the morning after the election the people of Lawrence were jubilant over a majority of some 1,500. It was with consternation that on the following day they learned that this majority had been completely wiped out, and a pro-slavery majority of more than a hundred returned by the crossroad town of Oxford, located on the Missouri line and least in population of all the precincts in the district. It was felt that such bold fraud would not have been perpetrated except with the assurance that it would be accepted. But alarm gave way to a spirit of determined resistance when reports of like frauds came with steady succession from diminutive Kickapoo, the imaginary McGee county, and an obscure precinct in Atchison county, that on their face would give a large majority in each branch of the legislature to the Proslavery party, and if submitted to, fasten the shackles of slavery on Kansas. Under such circumstances the people of Lawrence would not have been true to themselves in quietly submitting to the processes of law as administered by officers hostile to them. Threats of resistance, and active instead of passive repudiation as heretofore, if these frauds should be approved, were earnest and loud. The condition was aggravated and the anxiety intensified by the expressed political sympathies of the governor and the great solicitude he had expressed for the success of what he was pleased to call the constitutional party and the conservative candidates. By strenuous efforts he had obtained, as he termed it, "an equal division between northern and southern Democrats" of the legislature, and most of the county tickets. With this combination he had expressed great confidence of success, and through this "union of all conservatives, . . . a final triumph of sound constitutional principles in Kansas." A few days preceding the election he had addressed a political meeting in Kickapoo, a town steeped in Proslavery savagery and fraud, in the interest of this combination, and was so flattered with his reception that he at once reported to Washington: "The result was most favorable, and in this important precinct the union between all the conservative elements in our favor will be complete. Indeed, wherever the ticket has been divided between northern and southern Democrats we may look for success. . . ." He also expressed in the same report his conviction that the success of the Free-state party at this election would utterly destroy, "for an indefinite period, the constitutional party in Kansas."

Before a court with such strong political sympathies and stubborn convictions, with the fulfillment of a political scheme at stake, to which he had bent all his energies and on the success of which depended, as he conceived, the fate of his party and the existence of the Union, the party of liberty could not commit their cause with any assurance of justice. To add to the distrust of the governor amid the exultations of victory and

the free admissions of crushing defeat by the Proslavery party that followed the first summing up of the vote, with only vague and incredible rumors of official returns that would reverse the result, he was free to express confidence in the success of his party. On October 10, four days after the election, writing to the Secretary of State from Fort Leavenworth, when the large free-state majority of the vote actually cast was known and publicly acknowledged, and only manipulation of the Kickapoo poll books rumored, he exclaimed, "A probable Democratic majority in the territorial legislature!" Such a claim could be based only on the incredible votes of Kickapoo and Oxford combined, though the 1,200 fraudulent votes of Kickapoo were not yet divulged.

The hazardous condition of the free-state cause will be more apparent from the fact that in the case of the bogus legislature it was decided that the governor had no right to go behind the returns to determine the legality of the votes. This decision had been sustained by the administration, and Walker had been so instructed. Instructions given under the circumstances plainly implied that the governor should simply approve the customary frauds by which the elections had been controlled.

Legal counsel was employed by the Leavenworth members who had been defeated by the Kickapoo vote, also by those from Douglas county, to examine the returns and watch the counting of the vote in the executive office. No examination of the Kickapoo returns could be obtained, and it was claimed they had not been received. In anticipation of fraud, sworn statements by witnesses of the actual vote polled were filed with the governor; but from the executive office the reply to all protests was that the governor could not go behind the poll books. The returns, if genuine and in legal form, must be counted. The forlorn hope lay in convincing the governor that though legal in form and of genuine signature they carried on their face the evidence of fraud. Oxford precinct was explored, the residents counted and evidence of the actual vote taken. For some ten days there was hesitation on the part of the governor, and "I dare not" waited upon "I would," until a delegation called upon him at Lecompton and impressed upon him the danger threatened by a military organization, more than 6,000 strong, that was becoming turbulent and could no longer be restrained if the fraud should be consummated, and that he was personally held responsible for having drawn them into the Lecompton trap.

This revelation received a deep sanguinary coloring from what he had himself seen when lying in siege before Lawrence. With even date of this siege a convention at Topeka had authorized General Lane "to organize the people in the several districts to protect the ballot boxes at the approaching elections." Lane established his headquarters at Lawrence, and in defiance of the governor's threatening attitude, but following his methods, proceeded by proclamation to organize a staff of generals—adjutant, quartermaster and commissary—and with conspicuous minuteness divided the territory into divisions, brigades and precincts. He appointed a formidable array of superintendents of enrollment, divisional and brigade, and issued suggestive instructions to captains

to make a registry "of all persons . . . who shall refuse to enroll . . . and transmit the same" to headquarters. Walker saw in the instructions to captains a scheme to terrify the free-state conservatives into submission.

While the dominant purpose of the organization was more political than military—designed to accomplish a more thorough organization and effective action of the Free-state party in contesting the territorial election contemplated, but for strategic reasons not yet announced—the martial aspect was magnified and illuminated for its paralyzing effect on the adversary. Walker became alarmed at the development of this new "revolutionary" military organization and asked for the strengthening of his force at Lawrence by the speedy location of large bodies of regular troops and two batteries.

The objective purpose of the organization was a full and fair election. This it had obtained by a peaceful display of strength and determination. But it could not prevent the manipulation of the poll books of obscure border precincts by election officers from their retreat in Missouri. And now only by a threatening pressure upon the governor could it save what it had won at the polls. This was the phantom that now beckoned to him with ominous gestures.

To Walker's credit it may be said that when he turned he turned all over. As by his theory and instructions he could not go behind the returns, he would go behind the voters. So he and Stanton, taking with them the returns, made a hasty trip to the Oxford precinct and found the majority of the actual voters had returned to Missouri and that the fictitious votes had been added in Westport by the aid of the Cincinnati directory. By the help of a happy phrase that came to his assistance, the governor was able to get over the legal difficulty in getting rid of the Cincinnati directory, rejecting it as "fictitious and simulated." On their return from the investigation they stopped in Lawrence at the Morrow House, and were met by a crowd intensely anxious to learn the decision which was to determine the character of the legislature that was felt to control the destiny of Kansas.

The physical exploration of the field worked the governor into a "fine frenzy" such as no official examination in the seclusion of his room could have produced, and when asked his conclusion about the returns he flung the roll across the office, unrolling it the full length of the room, with the contemptuous remark, "There's your Oxford vote!" It was found to measure fifty-two feet in length and was a creditable result of patience and penmanship. No written indorsement could have expressed condemnation of the returns equal to this contemptuous treatment.

In face of the exposure of the fraud, the candidates who sought to profit by it obtained a writ of mandamus from Judge Cato to compel the governor to issue certificates of election to them. But he refused, and showed the depth of his contempt for the judge by offering to go to jail rather than obey, and issued certificates of election to the free-state candidates. The McGee county returns were rejected with like contempt and for like reasons. The returns from Kickapoo, however, though bearing on their face the sworn evidence of fraud, did not meet so unfriendly a reception. They had been held back by the election board, that had,

on the close of the polls, retired with them across the river to Weston, and at their leisure added some 1,700 fictitious votes to 600 actual ones—the number found necessary to give a respectable “conservative” majority. They then misplaced them in the executive office, preventing examination by the free-state candidates until called for on the assembling of the legislature. The executive minutes show that commissions were issued on these returns to the “conservative” candidate November 28, seven weeks after the election and only two days before the call for the extra session of the legislature, evidently in stealthy preparation for that event. It is difficult to reconcile the official conduct in these cases, as of all the fraudulent returns those of Kickapoo were the most convicting, bearing on their face the sworn evidence of falsehood. The blank poll books, containing eight or ten folded sheets stitched together, had been furnished by the county clerks to the various precincts, with the blank form for the sworn attestation of the vote written on the page estimated to follow the list of voters, giving ample space preceding it for the computed vote. Through tallies kept by watchers and by the position of the names of the last voters before closing the polls, it was known that this assigned space was not filled out, yet the balance of the book had been ruled and the whole filled in, more than 1,000 names following the form of the oath, which stated that “the foregoing is a true and correct list of all the votes cast.” The action of both Walker and Stanton in this can only be accounted for by the fact that the rejection of the Oxford and McGee forgeries had been the cause of complaints lodged against them at Washington, and that letters and dispatches had been received to the effect that the President and Cabinet had resolved to reprimand the governor and secretary for their action on these returns. Certain it is that Stanton, on November 11, withdrew his resignation, which he had two days previously offered, as he did not “wish to be understood as disposed to dodge the responsibility of my official conduct in reference to the Oxford and McGee forgeries.” This, with the knowledge that the legislature with its free-state majority already commissioned would give redress, decided him to leave the offensive business to them.

The happy result of the October election with its overwhelming free-state majority—only a single proslavery member in the house—it was at first thought, had buried all proslavery schemes beyond resurrection. So far as the responsible managers in Kansas were concerned, such was the case; and as the Lecompton convention had postponed itself till after the election, it was felt that the movement would be abandoned from the utter hopelessness of obtaining the sanction of the people to any constitution coming from such a source. But there was a power behind the scheme beyond the control of the people of Kansas, and with no consideration for their wishes. It regarded Kansas simply as a pawn upon the chessboard in the game played for the equilibrium of the government, on which the existence of slavery was staked. That power was in Washington, and its mandates were issued by President Buchanan. The decree went forth that the Lecompton scheme must be rescued from the wreck and jammed through with a proslavery if not an actual slave constitution, in an effort to maintain the equilibrium between the Northern



and Southern states. The convention that was called upon to perform this labor, of feeble birth and ignoble origin, came halting upon the stage when called back to its task. The delegates had been elected by only 2,200 votes in the aggregate out of 9,251 registered by friendly authority. On the day fixed for their meeting, September 7, only forty-five out of sixty members elected put in their appearance, and after loitering some four days, transacting only preliminary business, adjourned to October 19 to await the result of the election. Their purpose to reconvene, regardless of the crushing blow of October 5, was accepted as proof that the measure, in its most obnoxious shape, was to be pushed through by the active support of the administration, now supreme in all departments of the government. This aroused the people to a sense of the new danger that beset them. The conflict impending was one to be fought with unequal weapons and disadvantage of ground. Votes would not count and population would have no weight. And should the convention be allowed to perform its part of the program the conflict would be transferred to Washington on most unequal terms.

The jubilation over the election was in a few days changed into indignation, the more intense as the danger threatening was intangible—not to be averted nor repelled by any means provided by law, but aggravated by submission. The realization of these conditions that threatened the cause of freedom in the very hour of its triumph set the whole territory in a wild uproar. Everywhere meetings and conventions were held, denunciatory resolutions passed, inflammatory speeches made, and excitement kept up to a boiling heat. Secret societies sprang up, oath-bound, to resort to the most extreme measures necessary to thwart the movement. Lane went flaming like a portentous comet throughout the territory, denouncing the convention and instigating the betrayed citizens to assemble at Lecompton on the day for the meeting of the convention and frown it out of existence, nothing being so difficult for scoundrels to do “as to meet the clear, honest gaze of the men they are trying to wrong.” The result of the agitation was that on the appointed day Lecompton found itself with an overflow of indignant population such as it had never before witnessed—the very reverse of the border-ruffian hordes that had made it their rendezvous.

The preliminaries had been arranged two days before at a large open-air mass meeting held in Lawrence in front of the Morrow House, from which flowed a stream of indignant oratory and expressive resolutions, such as only those tumultuous times could produce. It was there resolved to go *en masse* and pay their respects to the convention on its assembling. The bursts of indignation and invective that poured out from these meetings caused quaking among the usurping delegates that threatened to prevent their meeting. Walker, when first applied to, was disposed to deny them the protection of the troops, as he did not desire to place the convention in the attitude of being unable to conduct its proceedings except under the protection of the troops of the United States. But Sheriff Jones, who was a delegate, hearing the portentous rumbling of the gathering storm, early on the morning of assembling dispatched a messenger in haste with an urgent call upon the governor

"to bring troops forthwith" for the protection of the convention. Sherman's battery was hastily ordered from Lawrence, but did not reach Lecompton until evening, just in time to see, as the governor records, the quiet dispersal of the assembled crowd and the subsidence of the popular commotion.

It was an imposing cavalcade that set out from Lawrence for Lecompton on the morning of that day, October 19. Every horse and vehicle in the surrounding country was pressed into the service, or rather gladly contributed, constantly swelling the crowd as it advanced. Meeting the masses that were swarming into Lecompton from other directions, the assemblage took a position in the street in front of the hall appointed for the meeting place of the convention, and from a wagon drawn up as a rostrum, poured forth streams of indignation and invective such as only an intangible exigency could produce with orators charged to overflowing. Of one of the effusions of that day, T. Dwight Thacher, editor of the Lawrence *Republican*, himself an orator, published next day: "No report, official or otherwise, could do justice to the efforts of General Lane. For thrilling pathos, for withering invective, for crushing argument, for sublime earnestness of purpose, his speech of yesterday stands without a parallel in his history. . . . Jim Lane, the fighter, is enough to scatter a panic through a legion of ruffians; but Jim Lane, the orator, is more an object of dread than was Cromwell to the infamous Long Parliament."

The meeting closed by announcing its purposes defiantly in face of the convention, in a set of resolutions prepared by a committee composed of Wm. Hutchinson, O. E. Learnard, E. B. Whitman, G. W. Deitzler, J. P. Root, J. B. Abbott and G. F. Warren. The following is one of the resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That we utterly and forever protest against the assembling of any body of men at Lecompton, on this day or hereafter, claiming the right to act as our agents in making a constitution for our common observance; that we delegate to no finite power the responsibility of representatives, unless the people are first the free instruments of their election; and that it is the duty of the 'whole people' to fervently repudiate and spurn any attempt to force upon them so contemptible an imposition as the professed work of that misnamed convention, and to set at naught whatever may emanate from them."<sup>69</sup>

The apprehension produced among the delegates by the calling of this assemblage in the den of the slave power prevented a quorum from being present on that day. Most of those who had arrived remained *incognito*, watching the proceedings from overlooking windows, or moving timorously around the outskirts of the crowd. Sheriff Jones, with a few of the more daring border ruffians, from a knowledge of Sherman's battery approaching and hourly expected, maintained a defiant attitude and sought to provoke a collision; but the glowing enthusiasm of the gathering multitude, with the swelling consciousness of power, had changed their vengeful passions into scornful contempt, and his quarrelsome taunts were returned with badinage.

69. For a good account of this meeting see Speer's "Life of Gen. James H. Lane," 2d ed., 1897, p. 137 *et seq.*

So impressive was the demonstration that for three days no quorum of the convention could be obtained, only twenty appearing on the first day. But for Sherman's artillery, that stood constant guard, it is not probable that the Lecompton convention ever would have met again, unless in hiding, to complete the nasty business imposed upon it. However, from behind a protecting battery it was enabled to complete its task, and some forty-five members set their hands to the instrument, that, by evidence obtained by a subsequent congressional committee, had been prepared and forwarded from Washington. The constitution thus framed was a piece of ingenious political legerdemain. While providing for the submission alone of the question of slavery to a popular vote, the ballots were so framed that a vote either for or against slavery was a vote for the constitution, and would not in any event "interfere with the right of property in slaves then in the territory."

Such a proposition was a confession of fraud and an open defiance of the governor, who in promoting the scheme had pledged the convention to a submission of the whole constitution. It was truly foreseen by the conspirators that fair submission insured certain rejection, and his treatment of the Oxford returns made him an unreliable custodian of anything emanating from the convention. The Lecompton constitution was to the slave party the "ark of the covenant" that no profane hands might touch or unconsecrated officers minister before. So the whole routine of official service connected with the affair was committed to Calhoun, the president of the convention, an intense partisan, who proved himself, as anticipated, reckless, unscrupulous and perfidious—attributes that commended him to the convention.

With Democratic majorities in both branches of Congress, the promoters of the scheme felt secure of ultimate success could it be passed safely through the first stages. The convention had smoothed the way and provided for pushing it through at high pressure. It had been completed on November 3 with less than ten days' consideration by the convention; and to anticipate obstructive legislation, the elections provided under it were set in advance of the day fixed for the meeting of the territorial legislature. The arrangements for electing—or rather counting—a full complement of state officers, members of the legislature and a congressman, with the machinery for accomplishing it, were placed under the control of an unscrupulous partisan. A piratical craft was preparing to set sail, with no chance to scuttle it or man it with an honest crew. The only legal remedy against it lay in a call of the newly elected legislature to take the necessary action for remanding the constitution back for a fair vote, and to provide for the honest election of officers under it, thus rendering it harmless in the threatening event of forced admission. There remained, however, the alternative of physical force, the natural right to use which, as a last resort, the people of Kansas generally recognized. In the face of the obvious purposes of the administration, the governor declined to place himself in a hostile attitude to it by convening the legislature. But alarmed by the rumblings of insurgency, now real, he hastened to Washington, with confidence that, by per-

sonal presentation of the dangerous conditions which the fraudulent scheme had precipitated, he could prevail upon the President to redeem his initial pledge against an unsubmitted constitution. He found, to his mortification, that Buchanan's course was predetermined and irrevocable. Lecompton triumphant, in its unlicked deformity, had been given the place of honor in his forthcoming message, and was beyond recall, as it had been shown to a member of the Washington sponsors of the movement and "forwarded to Kansas by special messenger," with instructions to have it extensively published before the election, so that no voter might misunderstand the President's views in regard to proceedings of the Lecompton convention.

Deserted and contemptuously ignored by the administration, he could not return to Kansas and face the people whose confidence he had been led unwittingly to betray, much less become an agent in their subjugation. With a vision now cleared by the lifting of the veil behind which Buchanan had concealed his sinister purposes, and a judgment unbiased by the rush of events, he responded to his degrading with a defiant dignity and a prophetic warning that redeemed his administration from much of the ridicule that had been cast upon it. With a kindly loyalty that did honor to his heart, he relieved the President, who had betrayed and humiliated him, of the embarrassment of his removal by handing in his resignation; and laying aside his official robes, in despondency he retired from the stage. It was with a vision of three years into the future that he wrote to Secretary Cass on December 15:

"Disguise it as we may to ourselves, under the influence of the present excitement, the facts will demonstrate that any attempt by Congress to force this constitution upon the people of Kansas will be an effort to substitute the will of a small minority for that of an overwhelming majority of the people of Kansas; that it will not settle the Kansas question or localize the issue; that it will, I fear, be attended by civil war, extending, perhaps, throughout the Union, thus bringing this question back again upon Congress and before the people in its most dangerous and alarming aspect.

"The President takes a different view of the subject in his message; and from the events occurring in Kansas as well as here, it is evident that the question is passing from theories into practice, and that as governor of Kansas I should be compelled to carry out my new instructions, differing on a vital question from those received at the date of my appointment. Such instructions I could not execute consistently with my views of the Federal constitution and of the Kansas and Nebraska bill, or with my pledges to the people of Kansas. Under these circumstances, no alternative is left me but to resign the office of governor of the territory of Kansas."

Walker bolting away to Washington from the importunities for convening the legislature that beset him was accepted as official acknowledgment that affairs were in a desperate condition, and foreshadowed Buchanan's message of predetermination. Petitions and importunities now became useless. The time for imperative demand, with action, had now arrived. Again was the call of alarm—not of timidity, but of determination—echoed throughout the land. Meetings everywhere without number were held, and were harangued by the army of orators that sprang into

life from the inspiration of the crisis. Conventions were called to consider and determine measures to ward off the impending danger, and reconvened to reconsider plans and adapt policies to changed conditions and newly discovered points of danger. The free-state military organization, that before the election had enrolled more than 6,000 men for the protection of the ballot box, was inspected, brought up to a state of proficiency, and ardent regiments sworn in anew on the altar of their country. More than one secret league, with extensive numbers and honorable membership, bound themselves with the solemnity of an oath to the use of aggressive means, when others should fail, even to the unmanning of the obnoxious Lecompton state government, should it be forced upon them.

The emergency of the crisis and the solemn determination of the people is vividly reflected in a notable resolution adopted at this time by what was generally considered to be the ablest assemblage that had ever met in Kansas, numbering among its members, Robinson as chairman, Lane, Phillips, Vaughan, Thacher, Holliday, Ewing, Plumb and Goodin, and indeed all the prominent men of the party. They solemnly proclaimed:

"Appealing to the God of justice and humanity, . . . we do solemnly enter into a league and covenant with each other, that we will *never*, under any circumstances, permit the said [Lecompton] constitution, so framed, and *not submitted*, to be the organic law of the state of Kansas, but do pledge our lives, our fortunes and sacred honors in ceaseless hostility to the same."

But the opening strain of all assemblages was for the legal and peaceful means—a called session of the legislature. Secretary Stanton, upon whom the duties of governor now devolved, was in like condemnation with Walker, and already had received rumors of a reprimand for his part in the rejection of the Oxford returns. For him to convene the legislature now would be held as the consummation of a political crime, that would be aggravated by the possible acts of an indignant assembly just recently come into power. To meet this objection a consultation of the members-elect was held at Lawrence, and a petition for a call of the legislature was sent to Stanton, with a written pledge, signed by a majority of them, not to engage in general legislation. This petition was reinforced by the names of many of the most prominent citizens—Robinson, Lane, Smith and Brown. Besides, committees were daily beseeching him, and the rumbling of threatened insurrection was made plainly audible to him. As the limit of the time approached in which any results could be hoped from legislative action, a resort to the "ultimate resource" began to be seriously considered.

Old John Brown, who was flitting around watching the course of affairs, was brought into communication with one of the secret organizations, and after receiving from him a solemn pledge that he would be strictly guided by the advice of the association, and in no case take life, his plans were favorably considered, and he was retained in the neighborhood awaiting a commission that depended on the course of events. Brown's plan was to "unman" the Lecompton constitution by seizing Calhoun and his subordinates, with the official document itself, in the night, and spirit them away to some distant fastness of which he knew,

where they could be securely held until the whole movement would lapse. He had reconnoitered all the premises and expressed himself confident of his ability, with the choice of his own assistants, to accomplish the purpose without personal harm to any one. There were other organizations with schemes more unscrupulous, reflecting the passions and desperation of the individuals who were mutually drawn together by what was felt to be an atrocious political crime beyond the reach of legal prevention.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### FIRST FREE-STATE LEGISLATURE.

ALL THESE plans and conspiracies were held in abeyance, awaiting the governor's action in convening the legislature that would give promise of peaceful relief. The certainty by this time that the Federal administration with all its power was behind the Lecompton scheme, was making of it a national issue and would not be balked in its purposes, made it plainly evident to Stanton that he would be held to account for any interference with the program by calling the legislature. Besides, Walker had gone to Washington, where he would have a better view of the true inwardness of the affair, and as yet had sent him no advices on this point. So for these reasons, neither petitions, importunities of prominent citizens nor pledges of members of the legislature availed to move Stanton to what, when he yielded, proved to be official suicide. It was at this juncture that it was suggested to me, by some of those who had failed to persuade him, that I should try my influence, as our families were intimate socially and I had evidence of his personal regard. As a political ambassador I had no experience; but as everyone else had failed, I accepted the proposition, reserving the privilege of using my own methods.

I had just been summoned to a conclave of some Jacobin organization, of which it was represented I had been elected a member, for the purpose of initiation into its mysteries. But as the purpose of the society and the intimations of its proposed methods were too sanguinary for my approval, the obligation was declined and I bowed myself out. While there was doubtless more of bravado than of earnest intention in the conspiracy, it furnished just the material for an urgent dispatch to the governor, and I decided to use it. Behind a good span of horses under whip, I drove to Lecompton, training myself on the way to the appropriate mood for delivering the curdling message that I had charged myself with. Driving up to the little government building, I hurried at once into the executive office and demanded of Clerk Walsh, who was on duty, the whereabouts of Secretary Stanton. Walsh sprang up suddenly as if he realized the necessity of instant action in some impending danger and led me to the acting governor in the adjoining room.

Advancing in a startled manner, Stanton asked, "What is up?" Without preliminaries, I gave him hints of threatened danger, made more impressive by what I withheld, and reinforced it by reminding him that the free-state men felt that they had been lured into a recognition of the "bogus laws" under the solemn promises of both the governor and secretary that they should have fair elections. Now they knew they had been betrayed and were bound hand and foot by the Lecompton fraud; that unless relief were given at once by calling the free-state legislature

together, such scenes would be enacted as would make one forget all the atrocities heretofore committed; that proslavery officials would be found hanging on the trees of Lecompton with their crimes printed on their backs and across their hearts.

"How do you know this?" asked Stanton.

"Please don't ask me," I replied. "My life would be as much in danger as that of the officials if I should tell all that I know."

Stanton called in Ely Moore, the register of the land office, and requested that the statement should be repeated to him. Then after a few moments' consultation with Moore, Stanton stated to me, "You may tell your people that I will call the legislature as soon as possible."

"That will not do, Governor," said I. "It must be called immediately, and I must have it in black and white, with the seal of the territory attached. Nothing less than that will relieve the situation."

"Very well, then," said Stanton.

The call was at once made out, and a copy given me, with which I returned to Lawrence.<sup>70</sup>

It was the eve of the truce, during which it was to be determined whether legal means could be obtained or the people forced back upon their natural rights. The consulting members of the legislature, who had assumed the direction of affairs, having been held together in Lawrence by the gravity of the crisis, were in anxious expectancy, and the people, who felt the pulsations of the force that was threatening eruption, were fitful with anxiety. The message was received by the consulting members with a feeling of relief, and by the public with tumultuous rejoicings. It was instantly dispatched to Leavenworth, where a meeting appointed by Lane was to be held. This meeting had threatened serious disturbance, and the messenger arriving about nine o'clock quieted a boisterous tumult between the conservatives, who had obtained the organization of the meeting, and the men of action, who predominated.

The day fixed for the assembling of the legislature was a day of triumph and rejoicing in Lawrence, but one of anxiety and gloom in Lecompton. To Lawrence it meant the inauguration of freedom, won after three years of unequal contest against an unscrupulous power entrenched behind the embrasures of the Federal government. To Lecompton it betokened a departing scepter, the wreck of a scheme in which lay all their hopes; and to the promoters of the scheme it was a day portentous of retribution, magnified to each by the consciousness of his guilt.

Would the resistance to the Lecompton conspiracy, which had been organizing, break out into action, or be held in restraint to await legal methods? Would the insurgent rumblings that had been lulled by the governor's proclamation burst into a violent eruption from the massing of a crowd at the headquarters of the conspiracy? Might not an exultant multitude be transformed into a vindictive mob by even a slight prov-

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70. In an address delivered at Lawrence September 4, 1884, and published in "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 3, p. 338, Governor Stanton gives some of his reasons for calling this session of the legislature.



ocation? These were questions anxiously asked by the Lecomptonites, and answered by each one according to the state of his nerves. In Lawrence, however, there was no consideration of consequences. Crowds came together by impulse, intent only on giving expression to feelings of exultation in the consciousness of their strength, and the happy change of affairs, harboring no resentment for past outrages except to a few of their most obnoxious foes. A large majority of the members of the legislature had met by agreement at Lawrence, on the night preceding, and informally organized. Early on the morning of the 7th of December they set out in order for Lecompton with a triumphal escort. In that time of sparse population and scarcity of conveyances crowds were estimated not so much by numbers as by enthusiasm. This combined both elements, with all the accompaniments that swelled numbers and enthusiasm. Marshaled by the military leaders that had led the free-state forces in the days of armed conflict, and preceded by the Lawrence brass band playing martial music, the cavalcade marched into Lecompton and halted in front of the legislative hall. The hills around echoed with cheers for the Topeka constitution, and the ground gave back the hideous groans for the "Lecompton swindle." The surging mass was organized with Robinson as chairman, and addressed by Lane, Conway, Phillips, and numerous other orators.

The demonstrations varied greatly from those made by almost the same crowd on the assembling of the Lecompton convention. Then they were made in a tone of indignant and threatening protest and received with sullen defiance or timid determination. Now they were the exuberance of good feeling over a victory felt to be already won, and accepted with the suppliancy of acknowledged defeat.

The free-state prisoners of 1856, of whose harsh prison fare and discipline Lecompton could recall no pleasant memories, were an organized element of the procession. Their presence, made boastfully conspicuous, was the cause of alarm among the Lecomptonites as well as the source of some misgiving among prudent free-state men. But once recognized, they found themselves the recipients of marked attention. They at once became mascots for their former attendants and keepers, and were treated, feasted and lodged, free of expense, as a precaution against retribution.

At noon on the 7th of December, 1857, the legislature organized and proceeded to business. But it found itself without power to annul or amend what the Lecompton convention had done. It could only act independently, and its trust lay in constructing deadly parallels on elections by providing for the resubmission of the constitution. It passed a stringent law for the punishment of illegal voting and the making or counting of fraudulent returns, and it gave jurisdiction in the case to courts that could be trusted to enforce the penalties. As under the Lecompton scheme a vote against slavery was coupled with a vote for the constitution, the election on December 21, appointed by the convention for its acceptance, was not participated in by its opponents, who simply watched it for proof of fraud. As usual, the returns of this election were padded, show-

ing 6,143 votes, of which only 569 were against slavery. Of these 2,720 were afterward exposed as fraudulent by a legislative commission.

The state officers were to be elected on the 4th of January, 1858, and the legislature had provided for the resubmission of the constitution at this election and a canvass of the vote. The result was an overwhelming rejection by 10,226 votes to 161 for it. The Lecomptonites, trusting in Buchanan's official assurance, ignored resubmission, but turned out in full force, with the usual accompaniment of fraud, to the support of the state ticket, giving 6,545 votes to F. J. Marshall for governor, against 6,875 cast for G. W. Smith. Kickapoo, Oxford, and other obscure precincts that had risen to notoriety by the magnitude of their election frauds, kept their records good, returning, by the decision of the legislative commission, 2,458 fraudulent votes. But even so great a fictitious vote did not avail against the diminished free-state votes. The smallness of the free-state majority, 330, was caused by a sense of defilement in voting for officers under a constitution which they loathed. Besides, the free-state candidates had been nominated by a faction that bolted from the decision of the notable defiant convention of December, on its rejecting the proposition to participate in the election. As the bolters were less than one-fifth of the convention, it is evident that a large majority of those voting did so only to save the faction from a defeat, which would have counterbalanced all that could be gained by resubmission and crowned the triumph of Lecompton. But the most important and significant result was the total rejection of the constitution by 10,226 to 161 for it, or a majority of 6,720 over the vote cast for it in December.

Yet neither the indignant protests, the contemptuous rejection by the people, nor the official exposure of the glaring frauds that gave it life and marked every stage of its progress, were enough to secure its rejection by Congress, so persistent was the administration in its pretermination. However, they afforded grounds for a compromise in the English bill, which cast the vile thing back upon the people to be once more stamped upon; and on August 2, 1858, it was finally consigned to infamy by a vote of 11,300 against to 1,788 for; this latter vote being, by the most careful examination and analysis of the various election returns from the beginning, the full complement of the distinctly proslavery legal vote. The party had not grown appreciably from the beginning, the outrages perpetrated by the rabid element driving out the conservative.

That such an insignificant minority should be able to maintain itself in its perfidious course is incredible, except from the knowledge that they were mere puppets moved by the controlling power in Washington, which did not hesitate to use the most unscrupulous means to accomplish its purpose. In the consummation of the scheme, by forcing it through Congress, there was little attempt at concealment of the corrupt methods used in bringing members to its support. Political proscription, ousting from office, official patronage and threats, with the grosser form of corruption by the direct use of money, and indeed every means which desperation could suggest, were brought to bear, not only on the members of Congress, but on the party press and the army of dependents under the control of the administration, marking it as the most relentless and

unscrupulous conflict that was ever waged in Congress, and planting the seeds of disruption in the Democratic party. These methods, but little concealed at the time, were exposed and verified some two years subsequently by the Covode investigating committee, appointed by Congress in 1860. This committee summed up its report by this most scathing indictment against the administration:

"Your committee first direct the attention of the House to that portion of the testimony which relates to the Kansas policy of the present administration of the government. The patriot will mourn, the historian will pause with astonishment over this shameless record. Accustomed as the American people are to the errors and crimes of those in power, they will read this exposure with feelings of unmingled indignation. The facts revealed by the testimony prove conclusively—

"*First.* The emphatic and unmistakable pledges of the President, as well before as after his election, and the pledges of all his Cabinet to the doctrine of leaving the people of Kansas 'perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way.'

"*Second.* The deliberate violation of this pledge, and the attempt to convert Kansas into a slave state by means of forgeries, frauds and force.

"*Third.* The removal of and the attempt to disgrace the sworn agents of the administration who refused to violate this pledge.

"*Fourth.* The open employment of money in the passage of the Lecompton and English bills through the Congress of the United States.

"*Fifth.* The admission of the parties engaged in the work of electioneering those schemes that they received enormous sums for this purpose, and proof in the checks upon which they were paid by an agent of the administration.

"*Sixth.* The offer to purchase newspapers and newspaper editors by offers of extravagant sums of money.

"*Seventh.* And finally, the proscription of Democrats of high standing who would not support the Lecompton and English bills."<sup>71</sup>

The knowledge of all this, which came to the public by discovery and exposure, shocking them by its grossness and enormity, was foreknowledge to the people of Kansas that nerved them to the desperate remedies devised and held in reserve as a last resort. Had the legal means been denied them for thwarting this movement by legislative action, it is certain they would have accepted the ultimate recourse of an outraged people, with all its consequences.

That I was the agent, under Providence, in averting a sanguinary conflict and bringing about a happy solution of a distracting problem, by obtaining a call of the legislature at an opportune time when all other influences seemed to have failed, has always been to me a source of gratification and of justifiable pride in reviewing the important results growing out of a single act done at the right time and in the right way.

The methods employed by the legislature for thwarting the Lecompton scheme were: First, an act, stringent and of wide scope, for the punishment of election frauds; second, an act submitting the Lecompton constitution to a vote of the people; and third, an act giving jurisdiction in cases arising under these laws to the probate courts, and the appointment of a judicial commission to investigate elections. The work of this commission produced the crowning result of the legislative action—the

71. Covode Investigation, House Report 648, 36th Congress, 1st session, p. 6.

exposure of the shameless frauds by which the Lecompton scheme was promoted. It furnished to Douglas and the dissentient Democrats deadly weapons in the bitterest conflict ever waged in Congress against an arrogant administration.

The members of the commission were Henry J. Adams (mayor of Leavenworth and afterward elected governor under the Leavenworth constitution), Thomas Ewing, jr. (afterward general, and member of Congress from Ohio), E. L. Taylor, Dillon Pickering, J. B. Abbott and H. T. Green. J. D. Henderson, familiarly known as "Jack," who had been a prominent member of the Lecompton convention, editor of the proslavery *Leavenworth Journal*, and one of the most active workers in the cause of slavery, was one of the first witnesses summoned before the commission. Now Jack was noted for his saucy impudence and bravado under the border-ruffian régime, and enjoyed a reputation for skill in manipulating election returns. His testimony was desired by the commission in the case of the returns from a precinct in the Delaware Indian reserve, to reconcile the magnitude of the vote returned with the smallness of the population. This was just what Jack did not want to be examined about. Under the former dispensation padding of returns led to promotion; under the present, to the penitentiary. And as his services had been rendered for the benefit of the old order, he declined to accept the position offered under the new, and in his attempt to evade it led Marshal Walker and his assistants, armed with an attachment, a lively race. When at length run to cover and brought before the commission in session at Lawrence, he was beset with a crowd clamorous to hang him. Only Walker's firmness, with the authority of the commission and the desire to obtain his testimony, saved him from violence. Now Judge Lecompte, ever faithful in the protection of proslavery criminals, attempted to rescue him from the commission by a writ of habeas corpus issued to the United States marshal. The marshal applied to General Harney for troops with which to execute the writ. Harney referred him to the governor, but Denver declined to issue the requisition. The timidity of the marshal prevented him from further attempts at interference with the commission.

Henderson, finding himself helpless in the grasp of relentless authority, at length wilted, confessed to the forgery of 336 names to the "honestly made-out returns," and implicated Calhoun as *particeps criminis* after the fact. His final meek submission and willing testimony obtained him immunity. Jack was not wholly bad, and had been led into his course by the romance of the situation rather than by his prejudices or principles. In the final issue with slavery he did valuable service for the government as colonel of a Union regiment in Missouri.

But the most sensational and significant exposure made was that of the "candle-box" returns—a revelation that added debasement and perjury to the brand of infamy that had been stamped upon the Lecompton scheme. The election returns that were made to Surveyor General Calhoun, the president of the convention, had been placed for convenience in a candle box. MacLean was Calhoun's chief clerk, and was the custodian. Calhoun, from some premonitions of danger to his person as the sole

executor upon whom depended the fate of the movement, had sought safety in Missouri. The commission, for the purpose of examining them, summoned MacLean before them with orders to bring the returns. On appearing, he testified under oath that he had sent them to Calhoun in Missouri, then hastily returned to Lecompton and hid them, as he supposed securely, in an adjacent woodpile at the still hour of midnight. Charley Torry, a Pennsylvania Dutchman, taken to be only a stupid janitor of the office before whom it was not necessary to make any concealment, observed the movement at the woodpile and immediately sent information to Colonel Walker. Early next day the colonel called upon MacLean with a search warrant, accompanied by deputies to guard the premises, and demanded the returns.

"They are not here," said MacLean. "I have sent them to Calhoun. You are welcome to search," he continued, as he swept his arm around the office.

"Of course they are not here, but I know where to find them," replied Walker, as he left the office, and moved toward the woodpile, which some of his posse had been closely watching.

When MacLean saw Walker's confident movement toward the woodpile, realizing that the game was lost and that he was in jeopardy, hastily left his office, and, crossing the river, procured a mule and struck out across the unsettled prairie, seeking safety in the company of Calhoun in Missouri. The most disreputable of the Lecompton officials, Kansas was troubled with him no more. He died in the service of the Rebellion as a member of the rebel General Price's staff.<sup>72</sup>

The candle box was taken from its concealment and carried to Lawrence and made to yield up its fraudulent contents, closing forever, with debasing notoriety, the unbroken list of election frauds by which the slave party had installed and maintained itself in power.

An important measure adopted by the special session of the legislature was the reorganization of the militia, placing it under the control of the majority of the people instead of an appointee of the administration. It was considered essential that in certain contingencies of the Lecompton scheme the militia should be under the authority of the legislature when in session, and under a military board at other times. As the governor objected to the surrender of the power given him by the organic law as commander in chief, the bill had to be passed over his veto. Under this law the legislature in joint convention elected: Major general, James H. Lane; brigadiers general, I. G. Losee, S. V. Jamison, Asa Hall, George S. Hillyer, Samuel Walker, L. G. Cleveland, Calvin W. McDaniel, and John H. Whistler; adjutant general, Charles Chadwick; commissary general, Hiram Hoover; inspector general, J. Finn Hill; quartermaster general, S. W. Eldridge; surgeon general, S. B. Prentiss.

Brigadiers enough, it will be seen, to officer the regular army. But then honors were easy, and that was the number of applicants for the

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72. For valuable additional material see article by George A. Crawford, "The Candle Box under the Woodpile," in "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 10, p. 196. Biographical material on Lachlan Allen MacLean may be found in Connelley's "Doniphan's Expedition," p. 118.

title. As it was well known that the appointments had been made by the advice of General Lane, who was virtually commander in chief, I asked him how he came to have me appointed, as I had not been regarded as one of his followers and was not then familiar with the requirements of the office. He turned upon me a penetrating gaze, and with an air of surprise that I should ask the question, replied:

"Don't you own a big livery stable, and aren't you building the largest hotel in Kansas?"

As the expression is nowadays, I tumbled at once to the duties of my unsought office.

Upon the legislature of 1858 was laid the obligation of abolishing the entire code of bogus laws. Nothing less than a complete repeal had been demanded by the people when consenting to go into the election. Even laws unexceptionable in themselves must be wiped out on account of their vile origin and disreputable relationship. This could not be done without disturbing vested rights and legal titles, except by substitution of a complete and well-considered new code. The hindrances in the way of accomplishing this were many. The greatest was the shortness of the time, a Federal opinion placing the absolute limit of legislation at forty calendar days, out of which was reserved three days for pocket veto by the governor. Deducting time for removal to Lawrence for competent quarters, and Sundays, there remained only some twenty-seven working days of the regular session. Scarcely less of a hindrance was the friction of Governor Denver. In his message on the assembling of the legislature he recommended the "delay of any important legislation until you can ascertain what action Congress will take" on the Lecompton constitution, "for, should Kansas be admitted under this constitution, it would have the effect to nullify all your acts, and revive such as you may have repealed," it being so specified in that instrument. And although he was not able to stop the legislative machinery, he kept a steady hand on the brake, making free use of his veto, even to disapproval of an act for the repeal of the most inhuman of the bogus laws, that had been justly termed the "foulest blot upon civilization." He gave as his reason for the veto, "The peculiar character of this [slave] property requires the enactment of laws for its management and control different in many respects from that which is required for any other." Quite a volume of bills was consigned to limbo by the pocket veto, and a very important measure, providing for a constitutional convention, was smothered by the governor overlaying it on retiring to bed some hours before the beginning of his three days' option.

The bogus legislature, equally limited in time, had been able to enact a voluminous code. With greater unity in its make-up, it had accomplished this by drawing exhaustively on the Missouri statutes, transferring them to the Kansas code, page after page, by simply cutting the leaves from the bound volume and adopting them, often without revision, and correcting oversights by an explanatory act, defining "state" to mean "territory," and "Missouri" to stand for "Kansas." The component elements, however, of the 1858 legislature would not fuse sufficiently to permit such a method. Coming from some half dozen states, with as many

distinct models for legislation, it required great labor and watchfulness to harmonize the bills and forbid the acceptance of ready-made laws. Another hindrance was the crush of private bills. The incoming tide of population and the happy turn of political events had awakened the spirit of speculation and pointed out the road leading to easy fortune as lying through rapidly rising cities. And as there were but few sections of land and no townships in which one of these sources of wealth might not be built up, the members of the legislature were besieged by scores of constituents and lobbyists, that could not be denied, importuning them for acts of incorporation and for the location of public roads. The acts of this character cover 398 pages of the statutes. The would-be cities generally consisted of an illuminated plat with imposing hotel, and perhaps a dwelling, a store and a shop, with the title, represented by certificates of stock that it was considered a wanton depreciation to offer for less than \$100 each. Yet with all these hindrances this body passed general laws covering 469 pages of the statute book—laws, in the expressed opinion of an eminent lawyer, that are models for clearness, precision, harmony and effectiveness. While for these qualities the honor should be shared by many of the members, special service was rendered by two members of the council, who, often to the impatience of their compeers, scrutinized the bills, unraveling sentences, pointing phrases, dotting i's and crossing t's until there was no more space to admit amendments. These critics were Robert L. Crozier and Col. O. E. Learnard.

After forty years but few of the members of this body are now (1898) living. Those composing it were:

Council: C. W. Babcock, president; Lyman Allen, of Douglas county; E. S. Nash, of Johnson; Robert L. Crozier, J. P. Root and John Wright, of Leavenworth; Joseph P. Carr, of Atchison (Luther C. Challis was elected to succeed Carr, who resigned without taking his seat); Benjamin Harding, of Doniphan; A. J. Mead, of Riley; A. G. Patrick, of Jefferson; C. K. Holliday, of Shawnee; O. E. Learnard, of Coffey; H. B. Standiford, of Franklin, who died January 3, 1858, and was succeeded by David Sibbet, of Miami county.

The following served the council: J. K. Goodin, secretary; G. A. Colton, assistant; Abram Cutler, sergeant-at-arms; Jacob Branson, doorkeeper; D. H. Weir, engrossing clerk; Benj. T. Hutchins, enrolling clerk; and Rev. S. Y. Lum, chaplain.

The members of the house were: G. W. Deitzler, speaker; John Speer, Oliver Barber, Andrew T. Still, G. W. Zinn, G. Seymour and H. Appleman, of Douglas county; John Lockhart, of Johnson; George H. Keller, H. Miles Moore, R. G. Elliott, O. A. Bassett, W. M. McClure, Wm. Pennock, Patrick Orr and J. P. Hatterscheidt, of Leavenworth; A. Elliott and John Bennett, of Atchison; B. H. Brock, Rev. C. Graham, Harris Stratton, Dr. J. B. Wheeler and A. A. Jameson, of Doniphan; E. N. Morrill, of Brown; J. P. Miller, of Marshall; Henry Owens and Dr. S. S. Cooper, of Jefferson; Asa Reynard, of Jackson; C. Jenkins and Abram Barry, of Riley and Pottawatomie; J. A. Delong, of Shawnee; A. Danford and R. B. Mitchell, of Linn; John Hanna and A. J. Shannon, of Miami;

John Curtis, Christopher Columbia and Samuel Stewart, representing nineteen counties.<sup>73</sup>

Employees of the house were: C. F. Currier, chief clerk; W. B. Parsons, assistant; G. F. Warren, sergeant-at-arms; T. A. Blake, doorkeeper; Robert Speer, messenger; and Rev. C. H. Lovejoy, chaplain.

Of these men many achieved prominence. Crozier became chief justice of the supreme court, and for a short term United States senator. He served a number of terms as judge of the Leavenworth district. C. K. Holliday was the originator of the Santa Fe railroad, and has been a director from its beginning to the present (1898). Joseph P. Root became the first lieutenant governor of the state, and a minister to Chili, S. A., 1870-1873. Of the members of the house, E. N. Morrill was honored with four terms in Congress and one term as governor of the state. Deitzler won distinction in the War of the Rebellion, gaining the rank of brigadier general. O. A. Bassett became lieutenant colonel of the Second Kansas cavalry in the War of the Rebellion and later served as judge of the district court. Dr. A. T. Still was the originator of the science of osteopathy and founder of the institution at Kirksville, Mo., devoted to training in that system. Judge Curtis, who was for a part of the term the sole representative of the "nineteen disenfranchised counties," as he called them, felt himself charged with their interests in the saloons as well as in the halls of legislation. But nineteen counties proved too heavy a load for him, and he sank under his burden before returning to his family, dying in Lawrence a few days after the closing of the session.

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73. For interesting and valuable accounts of the legislative sessions of 1857-1858 see "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 3, p. 359, and vol. 10, p. 169.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### SOME PERSONALITIES, INCLUDING "BOUNDING BEEBE."

SOME of the arms that were taken from the emigrant train under my command in October, 1856, were still in the possession of the governor. The condition of affairs during the latter part of Geary's administration made his promised restoration of them impolitic, owing to the jealous watchfulness that his enemies exercised over him, and it was thought best not to subject him to any further suspicion or embarrassment. The change of 1857 had removed occasion for their use, and the position of Walker and Stanton offered no opportunity for regaining them. But when the Lecompton scheme assumed a threatening aspect the free-state men renewed their energies for a final effort to thwart it, and while first proposing legal and peaceful measures for the accomplishment of this, the ultimate resource of authority was not overlooked.

The 4th of January, 1858, was the day appointed by the legislature for the resubmission of the Lecompton constitution, and also by the convention for electing officers under it, that, if forced upon us by Congress, would give it vitality, poisonous or harmless, according as fraud or freedom prevailed.

The removal of Stanton and the appointment of Denver, with his sinister record, was accepted as a proclamation of the purpose of the administration to force Lecompton upon Kansas by the use of every means within its power. The organization of the legislature had raised the party of freedom from the position of suppliants to one of command, which they proposed to use. A well-organized and equipped militia, under bold and determined leadership, was the most impressive warning against outside interference or official fraud. The fraudulent ratification of the Lecompton constitution of the 21st of December had aroused the people anew and was accepted as a signal for preparation for the final conflict. Denver was not yet fairly settled in his office, having just taken his official oath on the day of the election.

Both occasion and opportunity combining, this, it appeared to me, was the time for retrieving the equipment taken from my company. So with the approval of the territorial executive committee, I enlisted some sixty men, well equipped, and with a couple of wagons to bring away the arms, set out for Lecompton on the morning of December 23. On approaching the town I left the company some mile or two distant, with instructions to follow me should I not return within two hours. Accompanied by Captain Cracklin and Robert Morrow, I rode into Lecompton and entered the executive office. The report of the movement had evidently preceded us, as Secretary Walsh was nervous and fidgety, and Denver was pacing the room, frowning and irritable. With a short introduction of myself,

being yet a stranger to the governor, I stated that I had come after the guns that had been wrongfully taken from my company by Deputy United States Marshal Preston, relating to Governor Denver the circumstances of that affair.

"Why do you demand them now, just before an election?" asked the governor.

"Because we intend to vote and to see that there shall be no invasion or fraudulent election, and we want the arms to enforce our intentions," I replied.

"But I have no authority to give them up," said the governor.

"They were given into my charge and were taken from me illegally, and I have now come after them," I said.

"Well, I can't give them to you now," curtly returned the governor.

"But I want them now and have come after them, and being personally responsible for them, I claim a right to their possession," I returned.

By this time the office had become pretty well filled with the dependents of the various offices and a good representation of the saloons that enlivened the town at that period. These men offered, one after another, their services to the governor, for which, without declining, he thanked them. Denver continued pacing the room with no concealment of his indignation at the dilemma in which he was placed. That his first official act should be the surrender of these arms would be a more serious charge with the administration than Stanton's enforced call of the legislature. To resist, it was evident from the firmness and persistence of the demand, would lead to a conflict, that in the irritable condition of the people would lead to a bloody issue. So after much hesitation he proposed to place the arms under the charge of ex-Governor Stanton.

"That will not do," said I. "Stanton is a friend and a fair man, but it is the arms we want, and we have come for them."

Other custodians were proposed, but promptly and firmly rejected, with a repetition of the demand, that the governor showed was becoming tiresome to him. Again, after still further hesitation, he offered to give them in charge of Colonel Walker. As Walker, being a militia officer under command of Denver, would be trammelled by their possession, the offer was peremptorily declined, with the remark, "I must be going, Governor." The two hours had expired; the company left behind had become impatient and had marched into town. A squad bolted into the office, unannounced, and grounded arms with a thump that startled the officials.

This was springing the trap prematurely—but all the better, it caught the game. With the entrance of the squad at the front door, there was a hasty though silent flitting by the back door of the doughty volunteers who had offered the governor their services. A minute before, confronted by only three of us, they stood boldly by the governor, bracing his resolution and prompting his replies. No sooner than they heard the thump of the muskets on the floor, the governor stood alone, deserted by all save his faithful secretary.

"Secretary Walsh, go and count out those arms," was the governor's response to the rough military salute of the squad.

While Denver, humiliated and indignant, continued to pace the floor in an effort to suppress his feelings, Walsh moved nervously in obedience to his orders, tossing the arms forward as he counted them out.

"Hold on there, handle those guns more carefully," I called to him.

"D——n the guns," he replied, with an expression of countenance deeper than his words conveyed, and continued to count out the 250 muskets and 75 sabers.

Late in the evening we arrived with them in Lawrence, where they were distributed to the militia. As no roll of the company was kept, only a few of the names can now be recalled, but they all deserve a memorial, as every one of them enlisted on the pledge that the expedition meant business. The names remembered are: Joseph Cracklin, Robert Morrow, J. M. Winchell, John Bowles, A. D. Searle, Ed S. Eldridge, W. Prentice, George F. Earle, Frank B. Swift, William Earle, Caleb S. Pratt, Richard Realf, A. H. Mallory, N. W. Spicer, Arthur Spicer, — Bigelow, Capt. John E. Cook, Thad Prentice, R. L. Frazier, and Paul Brooks.

While many of the scenes in the Kansas drama were tragic, and most of them grave, the situation was occasionally relieved by a little burlesque. In the summer of 1857, while Governor Walker was bringing every influence to bear to "dissociate" the northern Democrats from the Free-state party, his factotum in Lawrence called a meeting at Judge Spicer's, a point on the road between the two towns that stood for the two extremes of Kansas politics, for the purpose of organizing a "conservative Free-state party." At the hour of convening it was found that the two irreconcilable extremes were more in evidence than the conservatives. Representing Lecompton were Calhoun, Sheriff Jones and MacLean, with a numerous following. From Lawrence, Robinson, Deitzler, Realf, John and Joe Spear, with a crowd bent on a lark. To the confusion of the conservatives, who made dilatory appearance, the irreconcilables took possession of the convention and amused themselves playing ball with the offices, tossing them between the two extremes and throwing them back with contemptuous addresses, turning the whole affair into a burlesque. Calhoun, in declining the chairmanship, pronounced Walker's "isothermal line" a d——d humbug; he wanted "negroes to work for him, because he was too lazy to do it himself." The outcome of the convention was the funeral of the conservative Free-state party, whose first breath was its last gasp.

The least recognition of the bogus laws was so disreputable with the people of Lawrence that they would accept no charter from the proslavery legislature nor the assistance of the courts, even in the collection of debts or the punishment of crime. Being under the ban of the "Law and Order party"—the title assumed by the Proslavery party—and denounced as lawless, they cultivated a pride of honesty and well-doing that became a higher law, and more effective than legislative enactments. Debts were debts of honor and more faithfully discharged than obligations enforced by civil process, and general integrity was a better security than locks and keys. The exceptions to this were the enforced contributions levied in time of public need, generally as reprisals for

outrages perpetrated or from partisan hostility, and excused on the plea of necessity or of just retribution.

The rush of immigration in 1857, however, brought with its drift some who had not thus been put upon their honor, but took advantage of the careless security in which they saw the people resting. Here is a case in point. Certain travelers who had left their trunks at the hotel, on their return, after an absence of a few days, found them missing. On search they were discovered in the possession of two other strangers, of rather doubtful appearance, who had arrived about the same time and who were found wearing some of the contents of the trunks. The culprits were arrested and brought before an improvised court and jury, and their guilt, proven beyond peradventure, was extenuated only by their needy condition. To vindicate the honor of the town and insure safety of travelers by a wholesome example, it was decided, on the motion of one of the jury, to hang them. As by parliamentary law, which the people of Lawrence would never knowingly violate, the mover of the motion was entitled to the chairmanship of the committee of execution, he was promptly assigned to that place. Feeling his lack of qualification for hangman, he moved to commute the sentence by ducking in the river. This was agreed to, and he was again appointed to carry the judgment into execution. A closer study of the situation convinced him that some other punishment would be more appropriate, and on his motion to substitute whipping, he was again appointed as the executive committee of one. On more sober thought, finding that such barbarous methods did not harmonize with the higher laws recognized by the court, and the culprits having been held on the rack of torture more than an hour, it was on a final reconsideration decided to raise a collection, escort them to Leavenworth, furnish them each a suit of clothes and pay their passage down the river, with the injunction never to return to Lawrence, under penalty of having the first sentence revived against them. As there was nothing repulsive in the execution of this decree of the court, it was vigorously carried out, and was met with humble protestations of reform from the young men, who confessed it was their first crime and committed under sore temptation.

The legislature had twice removed its sessions from Lecompton—where it was required to convene—to Lawrence. Here there were better accommodations and more congenial associations, with no impediment offered other than the governor's formal veto, easily overridden. So every winter Lecompton was left to sit, a "lonely widow" among her hills, as Seward said, to the grief of her tenants, who were largely dependent, either directly or indirectly, on official patronage. But in an effort to retain the session of 1860 the accommodations had been improved, and the council, which contained five Democrats to eight Republicans, was depended upon to sustain the governor's veto, the question of removal having been made a political test. The seats of two of the Democrats, however, were contested, and by delay of the consideration of the veto until after the decision in one of the contested cases, and a little sharp practice, the necessary two-thirds majority was obtained. Governor Medary was not unwilling to remove, but Secretary Walsh, who had in-

terest at stake in a newly built hotel, and was tenacious of legal technicalities, declined to accompany the legislature, relying on the opinion of the United States attorney, whom he invoked. On the assembling of the legislature at Lawrence they issued the usual requisitions upon the secretary for the documents and stationery necessary for their business, only to be ignored, as if they had been a Republican convention. For some ten days the legislature continued to meet and repeat its requisitions, only to have them consigned to the secretary's wastebasket. It was finally determined to bring the matter to an issue and decide who was running the legislative business in Kansas. A summons was issued, and the sergeant-at-arms, G. F. Warren, was charged to bring the person of the secretary before the bar of the house to purge himself of contempt. Warren had already established a reputation as an ideal sergeant-at-arms, by obtaining for members all they cared to appropriate of stationery, and managing the perquisites of his office for the supply of an impecunious constitutional convention with all the needed stationery. The crowning glory, however, of his official career, he boasted, was the arrest of Secretary Walsh. Glowing with the consciousness of an historic act, he marched up the aisle with his prisoner, brought down from Lecompton, and committed the secretary into the charge of the speaker. As the situation had come to be one of delicacy and doubt on both sides, the speaker propounded only easy questions, to which the secretary could reply that he "did not have the documents," "the edition was exhausted," and such like. But Walsh's will was not broken, and his continued refusal to furnish the necessary supplies compelled the legislature, after twelve days' fruitless session, to adjourn.

But no sooner had they adjourned than Governor Medary, to relieve the situation, issued a proclamation convening them the next day at Lecompton. A fourth time the routine of removal to Lawrence was gone through, but with greater precision, avoiding the technicalities raised by the secretary. But notwithstanding their obstructive attitude in the beginning, both Walsh and Medary established pleasant relations with the members as well as with the people of the town. At the close of the session, however, the Democratic members turned upon Walsh and rent him for his insistence upon strict conformity to law in payment of their claims, and with the assistance of Medary, with whom he had come in conflict in regard to the issuance of certain bonds, procured his removal and the appointment of one of their number, George M. Beebe, as his successor.

Beebe was the last Federal executive imposed upon Kansas. His predecessors, except Woodson, whatever may have been their first intentions, finally yielded to the logic of events and met their doom at the hands of the administration with more or less resignation. Beebe came upon the stage as a substitute in the last scene of the drama, with an inordinate assurance and zeal, to snatch a miserable remnant of slavery from destruction, and displayed an ambition to succeed where others failed, and to take a bond of fate. As a member of the council of 1860, though the Lecompton constitution had been buried in a storm of contempt, he opposed the repeal of an act prohibiting slavery in Kansas on

the ground that there was invested in the territory between one-fourth and one-half a million dollars' worth of property in slaves, and that the immediate prohibition of an existing right of property in any given article was beyond the legislative power of the states or territories, as contravening the letter and spirit of articles 4 and 5 of the amendments to the Federal constitution.

Snatching an opportunity to act as governor in the absence of Medary, he wrote to Buchanan concerning Montgomery and the troubles in southern Kansas:

"Nothing short of the death of the ringleaders of the band will give quiet to the country. To this end I earnestly recommend that the governor be authorized to proclaim martial law, and to have subject to his command at least 300 United States dragoons. Any policy of a milder character will, I am persuaded, prove utterly useless."

His highest political conception, however, he reserved to crown his official career as it approached its close. In his message to the territorial legislature, at its final session, delivered amidst the rumblings of the great rebellion, he solemnly advised that:

"If God in His wrath shall tolerate the worst portent of this tempest of passion, now so fiercely raging, Kansas ought, and I trust will, declining identification with either branch of a contending family, tendering to each alike the olive offering of good-neighborship, establish, under a constitution of her own creation, a government to be separate and independent among the nations."

He failed to proffer either fortune, sword or personal service in founding the new nation, but bespoke for himself a position of great security from the "raging tempest of passion" in the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains, averring in his last billet to Buchanan that he "would be deeply grateful in the event of the organization of the Pike's Peak region, to be assigned in that new territory the position I now have the honor to fill in this." A month later he was snuffed out of office by the admission of Kansas, but with no Pike's Peak region organized to which he could retreat.

His cowardly and treasonable proposition made Kansas, in her patriotic upheaval on the breaking out of the war, untenable for him. He drifted back to his native state of New York, whence he was in time sent to Congress and acquired distinction as a noisy obstructionist, and notoriety by vaulting over the seats to join in a congressional fracas. For this he was awarded the title of "the bounding Beebe."

During the earlier troubles the southeastern portion of the territory, except in the vicinity of Osawatomie, enjoyed comparative immunity. But with the dispersal by Geary of the 2,700 that had been massed for the destruction of Lawrence, the resistant fragments of the party, balked in their larger designs, gave vent to their malice in the forcible settlement of claim disputes and the redress of personal grievances, provoking retaliation and reprisals. While these troubles had their origin in personal disputes, it is needless to say that the vital question which was uppermost in the territory was either the prime cause, or added greatly to their aggravation, and enlisted for the actors partisan support.

These minor eruptions, commencing under the administration of Geary, were handed down to the successive governors with constant increase in both aggravation and extent. They left in their wake unnumbered outrages, culminating in the Marais des Cygnes massacre, and, in consequence, the virtual extinction of the proslavery faction. The interposition of the Federal court under Judge Joseph Williams and Deputy Marshal Geo. P. Hamilton widened the objective issue and increased the volume of resistance until under Medary it assumed the proportions of an insurrection, with Montgomery and Brown as leaders, arrayed against conservative free-state authority as well as proslavery intrusion.

Against this combination had been sent United States marshals and deputy marshals with their posses, Federal troops and specially enlisted companies of militia, only to provoke resistance and aggravate the disturbance. Medary had declined a proposition from Lane to bring, by his personal influence, both Montgomery and Brown ". . . without delay, before the Kansas legislature, now in session, or before any tribunal," for a hearing, as a method of restoring peace. Col. Sam Walker, who had been sent as a special envoy to the "infected district," with all his prestige as a gallant defender and peace-maker, could report nothing for encouragement in establishing order and security by the methods insisted upon by the governor. As Montgomery's plea in justification of resistance to legal authority was the partisan action of Federal court and county officers at Fort Scott, the legislature removed that pretext by an act extending the jurisdiction of Douglas county over the whole of the "infected district"—all prisoners to be brought to Lawrence for trial before Judge Elmore, who was accepted as an impartial judge.

Upon this Montgomery voluntarily appeared in Lawrence, confronted the governor, surrendered himself to the court, and issued a notice of a public address. The Congregational church was opened to him, and he addressed a crowded house in vindication of his course from the beginning of the troubles.

This was a fine political stroke on his part, resulting in a great change of popular opinion, condoning his lawless acts, and in the passage by the legislature of an act of amnesty for all past "criminal offenses growing out of any political differences of opinion." The governor's proclamation of this at once restored peace and amity where for more than two years all had been anarchy and bloodshed.

The effect of this law was to release immediately all the prisoners in custody. But a Capt. John Hamilton, who had been scouring the "infected district" with a company of militia armed with writs, had captured some sixteen of Montgomery's men, and unapprised of the changed conditions, was proceeding with them to Lawrence, some of them in irons. While halting at the crossing of the Wakarusa the report of his movement preceded him and aroused the people of Lawrence—who had become sympathizers with Montgomery—to the highest pitch of excitement. As the name of the captain was associated in the minds of all with the fiendish Marais des Cygnes massacre, and he was personally known

to but few of the citizens, it flashed upon them that this was the veritable outlaw. On the reception of the report a crowd hastily collected, and, rushing out, met the approaching posse with their prisoners on the outskirts of the town. As it filed by, the crowd by a sudden and simultaneous movement snatched the men from their horses and disarmed them so suddenly that no attempt was made by the posse to defend themselves. The prisoners were escorted to the Commercial House and dinner ordered for them. Those of the posse who escaped in the melee were chased around town, some of them, to escape recognition, throwing away their arms. Others were captured and brought as prisoners to the Commercial House, where the muskets taken from them were stacked, but they were given their liberty. Another portion, more faithful to their charge, accompanied the prisoners to the hotel, but quickly divested themselves of their accouterments and mingled with the crowd to avoid attention, or bespoke friendship with the prisoners as an assurance of safety. So abashed were they all, that of the arms furnished by the government none of the company ever cared to claim them.

Captain Hamilton, on the first onslaught, finding himself to be the chief object of attack, and not caring to give an exhibition of valor, put spurs to his horse, got away from the crowd, and, being well mounted, dashed up the street with the swiftest of his pursuers following him with shouts of, "There goes Hamilton," interspersed with cracks of revolvers. Reaching the Eldridge House he jumped from his horse and ran up the steps, where he met an acquaintance and begged to be vouched for. In the hotel he found a number of friends, who were able to convince his pursuers that he was not the Hamilton of fiendish notoriety.

Three of the prisoners had been brought in chains, their shackles having been riveted on their bare ankles at a blacksmith shop. The first attention was the removal of the shackles. With file and cold chisel, in eager hands, this was not long in being accomplished. But before the first one had been freed, Judge Elmore appeared with an officer and ordered him to take charge of the prisoners and conduct them to jail. He was met with the emphatic response that no man charged only as these men were should go to jail, much less be confined in shackles. "Very well, then, take them off," said the judge. While this was being done blank bonds were sent for, and as quickly as they could be filled out there was an eagerness shown by responsible men to sign them, though not one of the prisoners had a personal acquaintance in town.

No sooner were they free than they turned the tables upon their captors, making charges of abuse and cruelty against the obnoxious members of the posse and having them committed to jail before night, with accommodations in contrast to those given their prisoners, but which they accepted, partly for security from mob violence and partly from difficulty in obtaining signers to their bonds. Bonds were furnished next day through members of the legislature, and as the complainants did not wish to push the matter, further proceedings were stopped. All parties found their way back to their homes, the prisoners relieved from prosecution to become quiet citizens, and the posse, minus their arms, to busy themselves explaining to their friends how it happened.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE WAR OF THE REBELLION.

THE breaking out of the War of the Rebellion placed Kansas in the most critical position of any of the Northern states. With a sparse population scattered over a wide area, and further separated by numerous Indian reservations, with hostile tribes on her frontiers, and the turbulent state of Missouri, with which there was an old score that was sure to be called up, confronting and barring against help, it was the general conviction that assistance would be required rather than given in the struggle for the suppression of the rebellion. But the very desperation of the situation inspired the exertion to meet it. On April 12 the overt declaration of rebellion was made by the bombardment of Fort Sumter. On the 15th was issued the call by President Lincoln for 75,000 men to aid in enforcing the laws. The response from Gov. Claiborn F. Jackson was: "Not one man will the state of Missouri furnish to carry on such an unholy crusade." That of Kansas on the same day was a tender of 100 men by Capt. Sam Walker, of Lawrence. Within three days seven companies were enrolling in Douglas county and nine in Leavenworth, and within a week there was scarcely a county in the state that was not mustering soldiers in response to the call, and those that did not offer their services to the government were organized into home guards. Leavenworth, that had a predominant conservative element, committed herself at once boldly for "coercion." In the first flash of rebel excitement aroused by the firing upon Fort Sumter, when everything seemed to be drifting that way, a steamboat from St. Louis landed at Leavenworth flaunting the rebel flag. There was a rush to the levee, and before an immense and indignant crowd, which it was not safe to disobey, the captain was forced to haul down the emblem of treason and raise the flag of the Union.

The rebels on the border were equally energetic. On April 20 they seized the United States arsenal at Liberty, and with the arms, under command of Jeff Thompson, established a camp at St. Joseph. Rebel ensigns floated defiantly at Independence, Kansas City, Platte City, Weston and Iatan, under which were rapidly being enlisted soldiers for the Rebellion, threatening communications and the safety of Kansas. But these hostile preparations against her front only intensified the spirit of resistance that had taken possession of the whole people, and furnished an occasion for capturing the first trophy of the war. Iatan was a little steamboat town on the Missouri on the opposite shore, a few miles above Fort Leavenworth, and noted for its intense southern sympathies. The emblem of rebellion that had been raised on the first news of the outbreak still floated while the First Kansas regiment was assembling at the fort awaiting their equipment and orders. Twelve of its members, impatient

of restraint, slipped away from their camp, crossed the river on a barge, captured the flag and brought it back to Leavenworth. It was not won without resistance, as three of them returned with serious wounds, six shots having been received by them. It was a daring act, but by many considered as unwise, as the dominant sentiment of the border slave states made "coercion" a justification for resistance. But however they might have advised if previously consulted, the people of Lawrence would never disapprove of a brave deed nor censure a patriotic impulse. At a public meeting they enthusiastically indorsed the act and lauded the soldiers for their patriotism.

Such was the situation in Kansas and in the western border of Missouri when the companies enlisted for the Second Kansas regiment were assembling for organization at Lawrence. And as "Claib" Jackson was moving westward after his defeat by General Lyon at Boonville, an order was issued for the concentration of all the available troops at Kansas City, as well to suppress an expected rising as to oppose the movements of Jackson. The strength of the rebellion had not yet been fully defined nor its energies tested. The Union sentiment was largely dormant, and only by outside assistance could the rebellious movement be held in check, and along the border rebellion was becoming rampant. The anxiety and fear from this ill-defined danger, with the consideration of possible results from an unequal conflict, reenacting the scenes of '56, made this the most tremulous crisis that had yet occurred in Kansas. It seemed a duty, if indeed not a necessity, for every man who could to enlist, and to the promptings of duty and patriotism were added, at least along the border, the incentive of personal safety.

The earnestness with which this duty was fulfilled and the eagerness with which the calls for troops were met are attested by United States Provost Marshal Fry, in his report of October 6, 1863, which shows: White soldiers enlisted in Kansas, 9,613, besides one colored regiment and 2,262 Indians—the white troops alone being at this time 4,440 in excess of all calls. This from a population of only 107,204 returned by the census June 1, 1860.

During one of the waves of enlistment, when Lawrence was filled with companies offering their services, I was carried with the tide and accompanied the Second regiment, then forming, to Kansas City, where I was mustered in as a private, June 20, 1861, and on the organization of the regiment was commissioned quartermaster. Though but imperfectly equipped and hastily prepared, it was in a spirit of adventure that the troops set out to reinforce General Lyon at Springfield. The Kansas volunteers had gone into the service with the feeling of independence and unrestraint that had marked their course in the conflict with the border ruffians. They were soon to be initiated into the rigors of regular army discipline. Major Sam'l D. Sturgis, with some companies of regulars, was in command, having been yielded precedence by Colonels Deitzler and Mitchell of the Kansas regiments on account of his military experience. Some boys of the First Kansas had appropriated vegetables from the adjacent gardens while encamped at Harrisonville. By order of Sturgis they were arrested and tried by drumhead court-martial and

sentenced to be whipped. The troops were formed in a hollow square to witness the execution of the sentence, and the culprits lashed to the wheels of a cannon. The Kansans, who had not been trained to the subjection of the "regulars," demurred at such savage and humiliating punishment for what was deemed to be scarcely an offense, and were on the point of mutiny.

Colonel Deitzler, seconded by Colonel Mitchell, at this juncture proposed to resume the command which he had yielded to the major through courtesy. Sturgis declined to relinquish his authority, and enforced his arbitrary assumption by ordering cannon shotted and trained upon the Kansas volunteers, and administered a savage flogging to the condemned soldiers. One of them, a mere boy, with whom I was well acquainted and could vouch for, was reprieved on my personal appeal to Sturgis.

This was a most disheartening initiation into the service for the suppression of the rebellion, and forever clouded the reputation of Sturgis with the people of Kansas, the imputation of disloyalty being added to that of cruelty. Yet, when the command on the field of Wilson's Creek fell to him by the death of General Lyon, he displayed signal bravery and ability in retrieving the situation lost by Sigel's blunder, and conducting the retreat of the crippled army safely to Springfield and Rolla.

The hasty order to move from Kansas City to Springfield had left my business affairs in a shape that demanded my attention; therefore, as soon as the duties of my position would permit I obtained a furlough, at a time when, in the opinion of those in position to know, the force would be employed only in watching the rebels, with but little probability of serious conflict. After attending to my affairs and setting out to join the command at Springfield, I was met beyond Fort Scott by the report of the battle of Wilson's Creek and the retreat of the crippled Union forces to Rolla. The intervening country being in possession of the exultant rebels, the only available route by which the command could be reached was back by way of Lawrence, Leavenworth, St. Joe and the North Missouri railroad to St. Louis, thence by rail to Rolla—a trip of many hundred miles.

Here I found the little army that I had left so buoyant and confident when searching for the enemy, now greatly depressed by the loss of favorite officers and comrades. Everyone had a story to relate of the incidents of the battle, of the stubborn bravery and "the enthusiastic, death-defying valor" of a division of 3,700 men from a little army of 5,368 all told, that in an almost uninterrupted conflict of six hours repelled the assaults of an enemy four times their number along their entire front. We had lost 223 killed, 721 wounded, and 292 were missing.

The Kansas troops, engaged in the hottest of the conflict, had suffered heavily, and the losses fell with special severity on Lawrence. Both our colonels, Deitzler and Mitchell, were dangerously wounded and had to be left in hospital at Springfield. Lieutenants Caleb S. Pratt, a popular favorite, who as city and county clerk had given to Douglas county and Lawrence from the first its perfect system of records; Levant L. Jones, a brilliant young lawyer who had given up a career at the bar that prom-

ised eminence; and Lewis L. Litchfield, assistant register of deeds—were left dead upon the field. Among the wounded were William A. Moyes, widely known among the patriotic young spirits of the town, and Capt. Frank B. Swift. Swift had been inured to the hardships of a soldier's life as captain of the "Stubbs" in the Wakarusa war of 1855, pacing as sentry around the earthen forts through the bleak winter nights that followed that invasion. He had been wounded at the capture of Franklin in 1856; took a prominent part in Harvey's attack upon Hickory Point, and shared with that ill-fated expedition its capture by United States troops and five months' imprisonment under border-ruffian treatment at Leecompton.

Wilson's Creek, being the initial battle of the Southwest, and marking the entrance of the Kansas volunteers into the mighty conflict, deserves more consideration than has been accorded it in history. The valor of our soldiers there raised a standard of heroism that every Kansan and all western soldiers were ambitious to attain, and stamped upon the Kansas soldier a feature that has never faded out. Lane happily described it: "Kansas soldiers never retreat; when conditions command, they *countermarch*."

But the irreparable loss in the battle was the death of General Lyon. His firm grasp of the situation in promptly dealing with armed treason when it first showed itself with formidable equipment at St. Louis, under the deceptive form of "State Guard"; the quickness of decision that marked each step in his movements, the vigor of his pursuit, the boldness of his strokes, his personal bravery and inspirational force, with his happy combination of commander and comrade—all magnified by contrast with the hesitating and conciliatory policy that prevailed in other departments—marked him high above all others as the man for the occasion. Had he lived and been supported, rebellion would have been swept from Missouri before it had become embittered and entrenched, and loyal sentiment would have been restored and strengthened. Yet though his career was brief and abruptly closed, what he failed to bestow in actual accomplishment, dying, he bequeathed in patriotic inspiration.

The reversal of his initial movement, which followed the removal of Fremont, left a zone to be ravaged by oscillating expeditions of the contending forces, guerilla raids and vengeful reprisals—a field of blood, rapine and anarchy, to be redeemed only by depopulating it—as accomplished at last by General Ewing's Order No. 11.

Lyon's expedition to Springfield in pursuit of Governor Jackson, with his perambulating legislature and his gathering rebel forces, was preliminary to a more comprehensive movement that had its inception in the perilous situation in which Kansas was placed. In Missouri the strength of the rebellion lay along her western border, and was stimulated into virulence by the irritating memories of defeat in the Kansas conflict. The dangerous and turbulent element that had been developed by that conflict and that dominated the border were drawn by affinity to the rebel standard.

The rebellion instantly sprang into life in the full strength of all its

elements, and was taking shape for aggressive action at the word of Jackson, who had been invested by a servile legislature with the unrestricted power of a dictator, and given control of the funds and military resources of the state. To strengthen the western rim of the Confederacy and to push the conflict outward, Major General Price, who had been appointed to the command of all the forces, and nine brigadiers among whom the state was apportioned, were mustering the militia under orders to mass them at Boonville and Lexington as fast as organized. Before this storm of secession which swept over Missouri with the terrors of military despotism, patriotism became dormant, and Unionists, except within reach of Federal protection, were paralyzed.

To meet these threatening conditions was the proposition to organize an "Army of the Border" with headquarters at Fort Leavenworth, and with strength enough that, coöperating with the Department of Missouri and augmenting its forces as it moved by enlistments from the loyal population, would drive the rebel hordes from the state and pursue them to the Gulf—thus cultivating in the breadth of its sweep a Union sentiment, removing in its march the prime cause of the rebellion, reconstructing the states and establishing Federal supremacy. This would strike a telling blow at the Confederacy in its unprotected rear. It was a grand scheme, at least in conception, and in the first outburst of combative impulse seemed effective and practicable. The situation was urgent and immediate, the proposition definite and feasible, and had the sanction of Lincoln, who recommended it to General Hunter, commanding Fort Leavenworth. A proposition more comprehensive, distant and indefinite had the approval of the prudent and wary McClellan. In his memorandum addressed to the President on assuming the command of the Federal army on the 4th of August, 1861, defining the lines of military operation proposed for the suppression of the rebellion, he adds next after an important movement down the Mississippi: "There is another independent movement that has often been suggested, and which has always recommended itself to my judgment. I refer to a movement from Kansas and Nebraska through the Indian territory upon Red river and western Texas, for the purpose of protecting and developing the latent Union and free-state sentiment well known to predominate in western Texas, and which . . . will, if protected, ultimately organize that section into a free state."<sup>74</sup>

But the plan, so promising in conception, was entered upon with feebleness, hesitation and delay, and balked in execution. The neglect to strengthen General Lyon in the initial stage of the movement led to his sacrifice, with the sweeping back of Price to the Missouri river and the capture of Mulligan at Lexington. The vigorous and drastic methods of dealing with rebellion by emancipation, confiscation, execution and subjugation, proclaimed and entered upon by General Fremont when he took the field, clashed with the delicate treatment and Fabian policy that prevailed in other departments, embarrassed by the conviction that the Union could be restored only by the preservation of slavery and the conciliation of the rebels. His methods received the stamp of disapproval

74. War of Rebellion Official Records, series 1, vol. 5, p. 7.

by his dismissal from the command, and the turning back of his expedition from Springfield carried all the force of a reprimand.

With a force of 30,000 men, including 5,000 cavalry and 86 guns, he had overcome difficulties reported by the War Department to be insuperable. He had driven the rebels before him to the verge of the state. His "body guard," with the "Prairie Scouts," 300 sabers in all, under Major Zagonyi, had accomplished the most brilliant and daring achievement in the annals of the war. Forty miles in advance of support they had dashed into Springfield when it was occupied by 1,200 infantry and 400 cavalry, well posted on the crown of a hill, awaiting them. They dashed through a lane lined with sharpshooters, leaving in their track seventy wounded and dead, and charged through a fire of musketry, slashing with their sabers, driving the cavalry into a cornfield for escape, and chasing the infantry, pursuing them in squads through the town, holding possession till nightfall made it prudent for them to withdraw, with a loss of eighty-four dead and wounded.

The reward of this brilliant exploit was an order from McClellan for their mustering out of the service, though enlisted for three years, with a close scrutiny of their pay roll.

But the Kansas troops, at this time numbering seven regiments, remained loyal to Fremont, and while deprived of his leadership devoted their energies to the enforcement of his proclamation, and anticipating the confiscation act of Congress.

With McClellan in command at Washington and Halleck at St. Louis, the aggressive policy was suspended; the former deciding "that the interests of the government will be best served by fortifying and holding in considerable strength Rolla, Sedalia and other interior points."

This withdrawal of the Union troops and abandonment of the disputed district was promptly accepted by Price as an invitation to return, reoccupy and ravage if he could not hold it. So again he swept over the devoted zone, pushing his advance to the Missouri under Rains and Stein, and again occupying Lexington. This unchallenged advance of the rebel forces was accepted as a proof of Federal inability to cope with the Confederacy, and revived the embers of rebellion in north Missouri, stirred into activity the skulking bands of guerrillas and rekindled the fires of personal animosity between unionists and rebel sympathizers. This revival of the spirit of rebellion bore fruit in the disabling of 100 miles of the North Missouri railroad, the burning of Warsaw and Platte City, with conflicts at Glasgow, Lexington and many other points and a multitude of personal outrages unrecorded.

Under such conditions across the border, it could not be otherwise than that the Kansas troops, with the blood of '56 in their veins and the fresh memories of Wilson's Creek, should adopt the proclamation of Fremont as their guide, rather than the order of Halleck, and indulge in the practices of irregular warfare. Nor was it surprising that these practices should become so fixed and general as to convince General McClellan that orders arresting it would not be obeyed, and that the only way to stop it would be to remove the Kansas troops to some other field of action. The gentle-dealing Halleck eventually protested to Washington against

any of the Kansas brigade coming into his department, threatening to disarm every one whom he could catch.

This dangerous situation into which the affairs of the border had drifted was relieved only by the vigorous action of General Pope, commanding in the central district, driving back the rebel forces with heavy losses through Springfield and across the line into the Boston mountains. There they formed a junction with Texas and Arkansas troops under Gen. Ben McCulloch and an Indian brigade under Albert Pike, under the command of Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn.

Meanwhile the great southern expedition grated harshly on its trucks in the attempt to get it into line. A "regular" brigadier could not consent to become the adjutant of a civilian with only a senatorial commission. Halleck sullenly refused the assistance of Lane's Jayhawker brigade, and the movement so grandly conceived dwindled to a fragmentary force of 10,500 men, that under General Curtis projected against 30,000 rebels commanded by the skillful Van Dorn, won glory and an inconclusive victory at Pea Ridge.

The forces of Van Dorn slipped away beyond observation, and General Curtis, finding no enemy seeking to molest him, took up a line of march southeastwardly, half the length of the state, to establish a base at Batesville on White river, for operation against the rebel entrenchments at Little Rock. The river was found to have only half the depth of water needed to float the gunboats with supplies that he expected to meet. One of the boats that had attempted the ascent had been blown up by a rebel battery at St. Charles. A train of supplies ordered for his relief had been detained and was reported captured. Seven weeks of isolation at an untenable base determined him to abandon his movement against Little Rock and seek a more reliable source of supplies. He struck out for the Mississippi, crossing the Big Black on a pontoon bridge and wading through cypress swamps and cane brakes, struggling over roads obstructed by felled trees, harassed by Texas rangers, again disappointed by missing connection with gunboats and transports, short of provisions and weary, the expedition reached the untroubled waters of the Mississippi at Helena. The monotony of wasted military energy, disappointments, delays and struggling marches that made up that inconsiderate and fruitless movement from Pea Ridge to Helena is relieved by only one ray of light borrowed from the watchful and enduring heroism of a detachment of 200 of the Fifth Kansas cavalry. Under Captain Creitz, supported by a brave set of subordinates, they conducted the train, incorrectly reported as captured, from Rolla to Helena, 350 miles, guarding it for seventeen days, half the time under fire, harassed by bands of guerrillas.<sup>75</sup>

With the withdrawal of Curtis from Pea Ridge the rebel forces that had been marshaled under Van Dorn sprang again into activity, with clash of arms in the Southwest under General Hindman, and again the wave of rebellion surged back over western Missouri. General Coffee made a dash over the border from Arkansas with 1,500 cavalry. In his

75. For an account of the expedition from Rolla to Helena see "Kansas Historical Collections," vol. 7, p. 161.

advance, and on each hand as he moved, sprang bands of allies that swelled his force to 4,500 swift riders. Independence, with a garrison of some 300 men, surrendered to 800 of his advance. At Lone Jack he defeated a Union force of 800, capturing two guns, then slipped through the meshes of a net that had been set for him—a strong force from Fort Scott under Blunt, in concert with a force under Col. Fitz Henry Warren at Clinton, and others under Col. Clark Wright and Gen. James Totten—returning safely to Arkansas with no serious disaster.

The mutual pursuit, with the surging back and forth over the afflicted zone of the conflicting forces, led finally to a decisive engagement, that on the 7th of December, 1862, closed at Prairie Grove—a fragmentary and disconcerted campaign of a year and a half, conducted on lines disrupted from first intention. Commended by Lincoln to the commander of the department at Fort Leavenworth, a larger movement officially favored by McClellan, the proposed expedition was encumbered in its inception by the eccentricities and military presumptions of its senatorial author. It excited the jealous interference of the Kansas governor. The commandant at Fort Leavenworth, standing with sullen silence on the dignity of his rank, declined to sanction any movements except along the regular military channels. The tender conservatism of Halleck, who controlled the field of open operations, refusing the coöperation of Kansas troops, organized the expedition on a scale so ineffective that it exhausted its energies in an inconclusive victory at Pea Ridge, and was lost to the service in the recoil. But with Prairie Grove came a partial realization of first intentions.

General Hindman, with his forces massed, thrust himself between Generals Herron and Blunt, proposing to defeat them separately; but the vise closed upon him with such crushing effect that he was forced to withdraw his shattered army from the western border.

To return to the first movement in the campaign. From Rolla the Second regiment was ordered to St. Louis, and from the latter place into north Missouri. Except in the counties bordering on the Missouri river, where slavery chiefly existed, a Union sentiment prevailed, but it was largely dormant and needed for its support outside assistance to prevent rebel forays, and to suppress recruiting and outfitting for the Confederate army. The troops stationed at the various points were given large discretionary authority to suit the uncertain and changing conditions of the case. At Hannibal our regiment joined the command of Col. Nelson G. Williams, who occupied that place with a portion of the Third Iowa infantry, and accepted an invitation to go on an expedition to Paris to secure the funds of a bank that was said to be threatened with seizure by a rebel force in that vicinity. Paris lay a good day's march south of Shelbina, and the road leading to it lay along a defile skirted by timber on one side and a high bluff on the other. On our arrival in the town it was found that the threatened treasure was a fable—the bait of a trap that had been set to ambush us in the defile on our return. Twice in the stormy night that we lay in camp by the town we were rallied by the reports from our pickets that rebel forces were hovering around us. Early next morning we set out on our return to Shelbina, and avoided the am-



bush set for us by striking up over the bluffs and making a new route over the prairie. The ease with which Colonel Williams had been led into so visible a trap provoked us to an unmilitary method of changing commanders, and by a vote of the regiment Major W. F. Cloud was placed in command.

The morning after our return to Shelbyville our pickets reported the advance of a rebel force, much larger than our own, pressing upon us. Skirmishers were sent out, our position barricaded with cars, wagons and whatever could be brought into use, and preparations made to resist attack, and a call for assistance dispatched to Brig. Gen. S. A. Hurlbut, who lay at Macon with two regiments. The rebels were considerate enough, before attacking, to send a flag of truce with a demand for our surrender. The demand was promptly declined, though we were without artillery, and they, with a battery, outnumbered us three or four to one. Without reinforcements and cannon our position was untenable; and as Hurlbut failed to respond to our call, some close shots from the rebel battery, one of which took away Captain McClure's heel, determined us to "countermarch," and we hastily boarded the train and fell back on Macon.

At Shelbyville an incident occurred suggesting that even a horse may be subject to patriotic impulses and offer his services willingly to the cause of the Union. The horse that I rode was one that had been captured from the rebels at Springfield, and ever since had shared the fortunes of the Second Kansas. While I was hurrying my charge aboard the train the other horsemen set out on the retreat. With the last of my wagons on board, the train moved off and my horse was left standing saddled in front of the hotel. I could not hope to overtake the other horsemen or keep up with the train with him; so slipping off the bridle, I left him to take care of himself, committing him to the tender mercies of his former masters. I had hardly gotten myself, the last man, aboard the train when it moved away from the cannon shot. When safely out of range, and congratulating ourselves on escaping capture, our attention was attracted by a horse, under saddle, without rider or bridle, dashing up alongside of us and keeping pace with the cars. He crossed the gullies and leaped the ditches like a steeplechaser. This pace he kept up for eight or ten miles, when at the first convenient point his loyalty was rewarded by taking him aboard the train.

On reaching Macon the cause of failure to send us support was found to be the drunkenness of the commanding officer, Hurlbut. As we had been forced to the humiliation of a retreat by his incompetency, we got a little satisfaction out of the situation by preferring charges of drunkenness against him and having him sent under arrest to St. Louis.

On arriving at Macon our regrets at being misled into the fruitless expedition, the chief glory of which was our escape from the rebel toils in which we had been twice nearly inclosed, gave way to a feeling of satisfaction, and a realization of the unseen dangers that beset the path of the soldier was more deeply felt.

We found that our misadventure had saved us from the Platte bridge disaster, which all the facts show had been planned for us. The regiment had been ordered back to Kansas to be mustered out, and but for the

diversion to Paris would have been aboard the ill-fated train. The timbers of the bridge had been sawed, so that when the train passed onto it the whole was precipitated to the bed of the stream below, resulting in the death of nineteen persons, two of whom were soldiers from Lawrence—L. L. Shaw and ——— Bassett. Among the victims was also Barclay Coppoc, who had attained notoriety as one of the followers of John Brown on antislavery forays in Kansas and who had been with him at Harper's Ferry. He was lieutenant in the Third Kansas under Colonel Montgomery.

The efforts of the rebels in north Missouri were now directed to crippling the railroad, as it was the main reliance for supplies for the western department, and a squad of lurking rebels could in this way accomplish more than a brigade in open conflict.

With an escort of one company, I was ordered by Major Cloud to return to Hannibal and bring away some sick and wounded with baggage and supplies that had been left there. This was at that time considered a dangerous mission, as every bridge or culvert might be a death trap and every skirt of timber an ambushade. The skulking and treacherous mode of warfare had been adopted by the rebel commanders as the most efficient method of employing the local element and the fragmentary and irregular forces of the rebellion in north Missouri.

But the rebels had evidently made a pause after the Platte river affair, and we met with no obstruction except the destruction of a single culvert, which we fortunately discovered in time to prevent disaster and were able to repair.

St. Joseph had been taken possession of by the rebels, who had driven the Union men into hiding. But on the arrival of the Kansas troops the scales were suddenly turned. Active rebels instantly disappeared—no one could explain just how—and their sympathizers assumed an air of submissiveness which they may not have felt.

As commissary supplies were needed, I made a levy for them upon those known to be rebel sympathizers, by way of compelling them to support the Union. This also bound them in allegiance to the government, as to obtain pay on the vouchers I gave them they would be required to prove their loyalty.

At St. Joseph we embarked on a boat for Leavenworth. Going down the river we passed the little Missouri town of Iatan, noted for its rebel sympathies. A lot of the rebels that had scattered from St. Joe were harbored here, and, lying in wait for us, fired a volley into the boat as it passed. The compliment was quickly returned by the boys, and the rebels instantly disappeared: Though many balls struck the boat, no person, so far as known, was hit, as most of the men were reclining on the decks, and a sofa in the cabin did service for a passenger, who buried his head in it, changing position with every shot that struck near him.

As in the first year of the war the secession element had not been eliminated, nor the limits of the rebellion in Missouri well defined, there was more marching and countermarching of regiments and disposition of troops for local service than there was organizing of armies or undertaking of campaigns. From Leavenworth we were called to Wyandotte

by the threatening condition of affairs across the border, only to be ordered back to Leavenworth, where the regiment was mustered out after some five months' service, and reorganized as the Second Kansas cavalry.

In 1863, while at Washington urging the appointment of brother Thomas as a paymaster in the army, Senator Lane insisted on my accepting the position. As both my taste and experiences led to other lines of occupation, it was with hesitation and at the ultimatum of Lane, who had control of Federal patronage, that I consented to accept what had been asked for my brother. As paymaster I was charged with the disbursement of large sums at the government posts in Kansas—Forts Leavenworth, Riley, Harker, Scott, Larned, and other posts on the border—bringing at one time as much as \$750,000 from St. Louis. The handling and disbursing of money is generally regarded as the highest ideal of a business occupation. While it is true that the office of paymaster in the army is of high honor, bringing one into most pleasant relations with all the officers of the department and commanding the good will of both rank and file, it is burdened with grave responsibilities that make its duties in a time of war rather harassing than pleasurable. The rigid accounting, the careful guarding, the innumerable risks, the dangers at all times besetting the custodian of large sums of money, increased manifold by a state of civil war, make the situation to an honest man one of intense anxiety and often of personal danger. Many times the escort was insufficient to protect against any real attempt at robbery, and was often better fitted, by the smallness of its numbers, to invite an attack rather than to defend the treasure. With all these obstacles to encounter, it was with no little pride that on resigning the office after a year's service I was able to present a perfect balance sheet and have it approved by the rigid accountants of the government. For this I am greatly indebted to my clerk, Michael Phelan, whose faithfulness, honesty and exactitude always kept the business in the strictest accuracy.

During an official visit at Fort Larned in the summer of 1863 I accepted an invitation from Col. Jesse H. Leavenworth, the commandant, and a number of the officers, to accompany them on a buffalo hunt. At that time the buffalo annually crossed the western plains in herds of countless thousands, grazing as they moved slowly forward—north in the fore part of the season and south in the latter part. Furnished with an ambulance and refreshments, properly equipped and mounted, in company with the surgeon, whose services are sometimes needed on such excursions, we crossed the Arkansas and pushed out through the sand hills in the direction of the herd. Like many other desirable things, buffalo were always farther off than they seemed, and it was late in the day when we came up with them. But there they were in the full magnitude of their numbers—not massed in a compact herd, but spread out over the expanse of the plains as far as eye could reach. They ranged in irregular corps, brigades, regiments and smaller divisions, like a predatory army with stragglers on the outskirts, and conforming their movements to the uneven ground. All were headed in the same direction and seemed to move by the impulse of a common instinct rather than to follow leaders.

A heifer is the finest game, but a bull offers the finest sport and his capture the greatest trophy. As my motive was sport, I singled out the biggest animal within reach, while the more practical hunters were looking for animals to furnish the juicy steak and the tender tongue. Dashing up to the side of my intended prey I discharged, as rapidly as I could fire, the contents of my revolver into him. As I was unacquainted with the vital spot of his anatomy, my random shots seemed only to arouse in him a spirit of resentment. He suddenly wheeled toward me, bucked, and with a defiant bellow charged upon my flank. But for the sagacity and skillful maneuvering of my horse I would have been the trophy of the bison.

This was before the wholesale destruction of the herds that at certain seasons of the year covered the plains for hundreds of miles in extent. The slaughter for their hides began with the extension of the railroads into their range, and was an object of extensive commerce. This was followed by wanton sport, which specked the prairies in a few years with whitening bones, as numerous near the lines of travel as the living animals once had been. Col. Henry Inman—who made a careful investigation of the matter from statistics obtained from the freight departments of the railroads, which kept a record of all the bones shipped, and from the purchasers of the carbon works who paid out the money—states that in Kansas alone, from 1868 to 1881, there was paid out \$2,500,000 for buffalo bones gathered on the prairies. At the average price of eight dollars a ton, with the bones of one hundred animals to the ton, he estimates the slaughter of thirteen years at 31,000,000 buffalo, or over 2,000,000 a year.

When all our party had acquired the material for a hunter's story, and the hams and tongues of the choicest of the victims were gathered into the ambulance, night had set in and most of the party sought what they considered the shortest route to the fort. That for the ambulance, however, required to be carefully selected. With the prospect of being out a greater part of the night, if not the whole of it, I with the surgeon and two or three others kept by the ambulance.

The quicksands and dangerous channels of the Arkansas make it a dangerous stream to ford, especially in the night. But with the surgeon sent forward as pilot, taking soundings and feeling bottom by wading, and with myself as driver, we managed by winding and turning to get safely over. No sooner was that accomplished than we plunged down again into a shallow bayou, where we had a time getting out, and then only to find ourselves entangled in a skirt of timber. Not knowing our location, we waited here till morning. On reaching the fort in the forenoon we found that none of the others had yet arrived. With their self-sufficiency they had lost their way among the sand hills, become separated, and came straggling in, badly worn out with their long ride. Three of them were brought in late in the day by the assistance of the Indians, who had extensive encampments in the neighborhood of the fort, where they were being subsisted by the government.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE QUANTRILL RAID AS SEEN FROM THE ELDRIDGE HOUSE.

Described by R. G. ELLIOTT.

**F**ROM its foundation Lawrence had been obnoxious to the party of slavery. The location of a distinctive antislavery colony upon territory claimed by the South as their share of the common patrimony assigned them by the government was viewed by them as an intrusion, and the final wrenching of it from the slave power was regarded as little less than robbery by the South.

This antipathy had grown with the course of political movements which had their center of influence in the town, and was intensified by the humiliating defeat under the Lecompton fiasco, and by national Republican victory, that formed the pretext for rebellion. The enthusiasm with which the whole people of Kansas responded to the call for troops, and the vigorous and thorough method with which the Kansas volunteers entered upon the prosecution of the war, contrasting with the hesitating and lenient methods prevailing elsewhere, and her exposed condition, awakened and aggravated the wrath of rebels that had only been slumbering since the suppression of the border-ruffian forays. As South Carolina was the mother of the rebellion, with Charleston as the head, Kansas was the first to offer active resistance to the aggressions of the slave power—the inspiration of the Rebellion—with Lawrence the prime mover. And just as the ruining of Charleston by the obstruction of her channels was regarded through the North as a just retribution, with moral effect, so Kansas offered like reprisals, with Lawrence as the highest prize to the rebels.

There was nothing to show that there was any special cause or personal provocation, either to instigate or aggravate this greatest of all the atrocities that stained the records of the Rebellion. In fact, all evidence points in an opposite direction. The leaders of the bands—Anderson, Todd and Yager—consolidated under Quantrill for the occasion, were not known to have had any personal relations of any character with citizens of Lawrence; and the previous residence of the leader himself commended his hosts of the city hotel to his protection. Individual instances there doubtless were of persons who had suffered at the hands of Union soldiers, who sought an occasion for revenge, and, finding a helpless victim, reveled in brutish atrocities. Besides, the raid on Lawrence was the culmination of all the movements heretofore made by the guerrilla bands that invested the border. And as crime grows by repetition and is aggravated by fruitless efforts to suppress it, excursions, the main motive of which was plunder directed against obnoxious individuals, became a raid for the extirpation of a community.

The difference in the treatment of citizens by the raiders was due to various causes. In the first dash through the town there was an indiscriminate firing at every man in sight, and pursuit of every one seen running, largely with fatal effect. But when the raiders found themselves in complete possession of the town and serious resistance impossible, and plundering and burning entered upon by squads, then the fate of the citizens depended upon the whims and caprices of the individuals into whose hands they fell; their ability to elude observation or to touch some chord in a heart hardened by years of crime. Some were protected by bonds of secret societies, whose obligations were acknowledged by a moiety of the raiders; others by claims of southern nativity; others by some little incident awakening the better nature of the invaders' hearts; but most who came into personal contact with them escaped through the inherent disposition of those into whose hands they fell. Even among criminals, as among others, there are degrees. All were not equally hardened. While some reveled in bloodshed, others seemed to deprecate the excesses of their comrades. The bands differed in their savage instincts. It was said by W. H. R. Lykins, who was personally acquainted with a number of the men, and protected both in his family and property, that it was Todd's band of bushwhackers from Clay county, Missouri, that took possession of the west side of the town. It was here that the largest percentage of the inhabitants were massacred.

Quantrill, under the name of Charley Hart, had found quarters in Lawrence some two years previously, with undefined occupation and associating with a band of men of more than doubtful character. He boarded at the City hotel, formerly the Whitney House, kept by Nathan Stone and family. The kindness towards him of Mr. and Mrs. Stone during a slight illness, with the attractions of the young ladies of the family, awakened a grateful feeling that was not forgotten in his destruction of the town; but was repaid by the protection of the house and all who took refuge in it. John Dean, a wagonmaker of Lawrence, was known by those of like interest as an active agent of the "underground railroad." His acquaintance was cultivated by Charley Hart. With the overthrow of the slave domination in Kansas the business of this institution was brisk. The fierce denunciations and wicked accusations against the antislavery men throughout the border were often overheard and accepted by the slaves as the very gospel of freedom, and pointed the way for them to a happy land. The seed thus scattered undesignedly did not fall on barren ground, nor the words spoken in malice fall on dull ears. The ruffianly imprecations that were overheard by seemingly inattentive ears were, like dreams after midnight, interpreted by contraries. Nor did the promised land prove a delusion to those who had the energy to seek it. The citizens of Kansas who would betray a fugitive from slavery were as rare as those who would rob a wayworn traveler. However people before coming to Kansas may have regarded the institution of slavery, with the legal obligation to surrender the fugitive to his master, the troubles and persecutions endured, with the lawless methods resorted to for its extension, brought the matter into a new light and forced the conclusion that the violation of all law in behalf of slavery was justified.

A year's experience in the troublous times changed every free-state advocate of the compromises of the constitution into a friend of the slave seeking freedom.

With this condition of affairs in the adjoining state, the frequency of escapes, with the increasing risk on this species of property in Missouri, impelled the masters to associate and guarantee a reward of \$200 for the return of each fugitive. There were not wanting among the irresponsible class some who were ready to earn this blood money, though treated by the community as outlawry and made punishable by an act of the legislature.

Of the band that engaged in this business of capturing and returning fugitives, Lecompton furnished a number from the hangers-on of the Federal offices. One of the most notable of them came from a respectable family in that vicinity. Even the neighborhood of Lawrence furnished a full quota of the disreputable band—reckless night riders with the methods of highwaymen. They passed with the breaking out of the war. A few of them—Lawrence furnishing one worthy example—settled down and became good citizens.

It was this band, more than the master and the United States marshal, that the conductors of the underground route had to evade. Charley Hart was known to consort with its allies in Lawrence, though he retained the confidence of Dean. The usual policy was to put the incoming fugitives in some safe place till danger of pursuit was past and a favorable opportunity to forward them had arrived. Hart was intrusted to secrete a fugitive in a secure place, with which he professed to be acquainted, among the Delaware Indians. But when the danger of pursuit was passed, and it was desired to forward the underground passengers, nothing could be heard from the one intrusted to Hart. Though a suspicion of treachery was raised, there were other plausible ways of accounting for his disappearance, and Dean's confidence in Hart remained unshaken. His true character at last came to light and closed his relations with Dean and his residence in Lawrence.

In the following winter, Dean, after a few days' absence with a number of his trusted companions, returned to town badly lamed in the foot, accompanied by only one of his companions, and that one was not Charley Hart. To those who inquired why he was using a crutch he gave as a reason a frozen foot from exposure on his fruitless expedition. However, in a few days there came in Missouri papers an account of a bloody repulse of a band attempting to run away slaves and rob a wealthy slaveholder. It then came to light that the company with Dean, under the guidance of Hart, were the party implicated. Hart had represented to Dean that the slaves of a wealthy master named Walker, who lived alone, were anxious to escape, and could safely be got away, with a complete outfit of all that a fugitive would need, and with money to pay their expenses as well as to remunerate their liberators.

Under the code of the liberators it was considered that the slave held a chattel mortgage for his accumulated earnings, with privilege of instantaneous foreclosure whenever he might choose to quit his master's service.

The company had traveled in a wagon and encamped in the neighborhood of their destination. Approaching the dwelling when all the lights were out and all the occupants presumed to be asleep, Hart, who professed to be familiar with the premises, was sent in advance to reconnoiter, the others to follow if not otherwise warned. On approaching the darkened dwelling Dean and his band were met with a deadly volley, wounding him and killing all but one of his companions. Hart had disappeared in the darkness and joined Walker.

The trap had been set for Parson John E. Stewart, from the Wakarusa, noted as a wily private raider on slave plantations, and for whose capture Hart had been promised \$1,000. For the lesser game he received \$300.

Dean soon afterwards left Lawrence for prudential reasons, and Charley Hart was heard of no more till after the breaking out of the war. After the organized rebel forces had been driven south, guerrilla bands sprang up on the border, and soon the whole region on both sides of the line was in a constant state of alarm from the depredations of a band under a daring and ubiquitous leader with a name of barbaric strangeness, that led to the belief that it was assumed for sinister effect. But the name Quantrill proved to be real, and has been stamped indelibly upon the history of the Rebellion, expressing in itself the height of atrocity in civilized warfare.

The discovery that this dreaded brigand was none other than Charley Hart, who had been serving the slave hunters in Lawrence, and who had set the fatal trap and led John Dean and his companions into it, was made by Col. Samuel Walker while stationed with his regiment at Kansas City.

Quantrill entered upon the Lawrence raid with a knowledge of guerrilla tactics, a skill in management and an acquaintance with the conditions of success gained by an experience of two years of activity in this kind of warfare. This activity will appear from a list of the raids in Kansas alone—besides countless unrecorded outrages by squads upon loyal citizens of Missouri.

Humboldt was sacked on September 12, 1861. A month later, October 16, the same town was revisited and burned.

October 25, Gardner, in Johnson county, was sacked.

October 30, the settlers were driven from Mine creek, in Linn county.

December 11 a raid was made on Potosi, in the same county.

Quantrill had now acquired such a fame that from this time his exploits are credited to his name.

March 7, 1862, Aubrey, in Johnson county, was plundered by him.

August 15 he has risen to the dignity of issuing an order, signed by himself and Upton Hays, condemning all men going to the Federal posts to enlist in the army, to be shot.

September 7, with some 140 men, he sacks Olathe, destroying the two newspaper offices and killing one man.

October 17 he makes another foray into Johnson county, killing three men and burning thirteen buildings on his route. Near Shawnee, on



the same invasion, he captures two wagons loaded with goods, murdering their proprietors.<sup>76</sup>

In preparation for his march upon Lawrence, the different bands of guerrillas under their respective leaders were assembled among the Sni hills and consolidated under the command of Quantrill, on the Blackwater, about the 20th of August, 1863. A large, fat ox, contributed by the owner of the farm where they met, was killed, cooked, and rations prepared. Doubly equipped, rationed and finely mounted, the combined bands, now some 300 strong—or as Col. John D. Holt, who represented himself as second in command, stated to a citizen of Lawrence on the fatal day, over 400—at five o'clock in the morning set out on the most daring raid in the records of the Rebellion.

The state line from Kansas City southward was guarded by a cordon of troops stationed at convenient points of observation, and constantly exchanging patrols, for the express purpose of preventing such raids; but giving, as it proved, a false sense of security to those whom it was intended to protect.

The band crossing the state line was observed from one of the posts commanded by Capt. J. A. Pike, of Lawrence; but being too formidable for his little command it was not molested, but reported immediately to headquarters at Kansas City. Here occurred a fatal oversight. Had a dispatch in like manner been hastened to Lawrence, an hour's warning would have changed the result. The reason given by Captain Pike for his failure to give warning was that, placed in the critical situation that he was, he did not dare, without orders, to weaken his force, and could find no volunteer, even for a reward, to give the alarm to the doomed town. The distance of Lawrence and the disposition of the Union forces made it probable that Paola or some more exposed town was Quantrill's objective.

At other points on Quantrill's route, where his destination was known, there was the same fatal inability to send warning. Only one instance has been told of an attempt to do so. In the neighborhood of Hesper a squad of the raiders stopped to improve their mount with fresh horses from a farmer's barn. The farmer, awakened by them and surmising their purpose, did not dare interpose. But a son, taking one of the fleetest of the horses, set out over a byway to anticipate them and give warning. But riding rapidly through a skirt of timber, his horse stumbled and fell, crippling him so that he could proceed no farther.

During all this time, while her destruction was being plotted, the toils drawing closely around her and a dreadful doom impending, Lawrence, unconscious of danger, enjoyed a sense of repose and feeling of security such as she had not felt during the raiding season since the beginning of the war. The seasons most feared were during the light of the moon

76. Quantrill could have had nothing to do with the raids into Kansas in 1861. He had gone to Texas in the spring of that year with a man named Marcus Gill, a Missourian. During August he returned to the Cherokee Nation, and was with Ben McCulloch at the Battle of Wilson's Creek. He then followed Price up to Lexington and back to the Osage river, where he deserted him and returned to Jackson county. It was there that he began the organization of his band in December, 1861, having by Christmas gathered seven men. —See Connelley's "Quantrill and the Border Wars," 1910.

when grass everywhere furnished abundant forage, when fields of green corn furnished so many commissary stores, supplying to the night rider both forage and rations that might be drawn upon without exposure.

Heretofore during these periods rumors of contemplated raids had been prevalent. To guard against them all citizens capable of service were organized into military companies and supplied with Springfield muskets, such as had been discarded by the government—the only arms that could be obtained for the militia. Those of one of the companies were in Palmer's gun shop on Massachusetts street, awaiting repairs. The others were, by the order of Mayor Geo. W. Collamore, kept in a vacant storeroom used as an arsenal, on Massachusetts street between Winthrop and Pinckney streets.

Rumors had not been unheeded, and guards and pickets had been kept throughout the night during all such seasons. For a short time in the summer of 1863, through the influence of the mayor, the citizens were relieved of this duty by a small company of soldiers stationed in the town to do guard duty. These, however, were withdrawn when the cordon of troops was stationed along the frontier specially charged to watch the movements of guerrillas and guard against invasion. This disposition, with the forces within easy distances, was considered by the military authorities ample protection for Lawrence. So the citizens felt, and rested securely, with less apprehension than since the beginning of hostilities. But it proved a most deceptive and calamitous security.

Day had just dawned on the 21st of August, 1863, preceded by a restless and sultry night, with but short refreshing sleep overlapping the morning hours. Only the earliest risers were astir. Busy people had just awakened and few had left their rooms. About the hotels and boarding houses only was the stillness disturbed by the morning preparations for guests. At the Eldridge House the help were just entering upon their respective duties and the guests were locked in slumber, when only those alert or most easily wakened heard a few desultory shots, fired at a distance, but in a minute followed by volleys much nearer. Then all at once bedlam broke loose, with whooping and yelling, a storm of promiscuous firing, and the clattering of a thousand hoofs on the hard-beaten streets as horsemen dashed through the town, many of them at a mad gait, firing at everyone they saw running and into every window of the hotel where a head was exposed.

The first volleys were generally attributed, by those who heard them, to a company of young recruits encamped in the town, celebrating their equipment, for which they had been waiting. But the yells and savage whoops, with horrid imprecations; the clattering of horsemen and promiscuous shooting, incessant and irregular; the squads dashing through the streets, intoned with the rolling thunders of the gong that reverberated through the halls, awoke the slumbering occupants to a full realization that the fears of the most timid had been surpassed; that what had been conceived impossible had happened—the bushwhackers, a name expressive of all that was most atrocious in warfare, were upon them and in undisputed possession of the town.

The help of the Eldridge House, mostly colored, with an instinctive

dread of the "secesh," as they termed the rebels, on the first sound of danger took alarm and fled, running to the brushy ravines and over the abrupt bank of the river. This instinctive dread doubtless saved many lives, as but few of them fell victims.

As the occupants of the hotel hurriedly left their rooms and tried to learn the true condition of affairs, the limited views from the windows overlooking the streets furnished all the information they could obtain. But that was appalling and gave not the slightest ground of hope for safety or escape. Even this source of information was curtailed, as the appearance of a head at a window was certain to draw a shot from the raiders who were constantly dashing by, and with drawn revolvers intently watching the building. One glance was enough to reveal the character of the catastrophe that had come upon Lawrence in its most appalling features. Dead bodies could be seen along the sidewalks; men pursued and shot down; any attempt at escape only provoked a fatal shot from a revolver. After the first dash in taking possession of the town, the raiders, drawn to the business street for the purpose of looting, closed these posts of observation. But the savage yells and loud curses, the shots and incessant clatter of the demon riders, told more to the ear than could be seen by the eye.

To aggravate the dread produced by what was seen and heard, there was the uncertainty as to the strength of the assailants. That they were veritable bushwhackers their manners and their deeds proclaimed from the first. But what were their numbers? Only those who saw their approach to the town could even conjecture. It had been held that only an organized army of considerable strength would dare bring its forces within striking distance of Lawrence. But what was this body? It was far stronger than any band heretofore heard of, and to those who saw only the investment of the town their numbers were greatly magnified. On their first attack their columns had spread out like a fan, and with squads dashing at the top of their speed had within a few minutes taken possession of every quarter of the place, spreading consternation and marking their course by the dead bodies of their victims, the piercing shrieks of the wounded and the cries of widowed women and orphaned children. The rapidity of their movements and the extent of their occupancy within so short a time multiplied every estimate of their numbers; and the boldness of the invasion, the confident manner of the leaders, with the abandon of recklessness that everywhere marked their followers, impressed everyone with a sense of a force impossible to resist.

With the first dash of the raiders the night clerk of the Eldridge House sounded the gong through the corridors with a prolonged roll that aroused all the sleepers but one—an eminent judge who slept through the storm undisturbed until wakened by the hostile guard an hour afterward and marched with the other guests out of the hotel in his stocking feet.

On an informal consultation it was found that there were only two muskets that had been retained, contrary to orders, by members of a military company, but without ammunition. What revolvers were in possession of the guests were found to be in much the same condition as

the muskets. Even an army officer, stationed for the time at Lawrence and stopping at the hotel, found his brace of revolvers, like his uniform, only a dangerous encumbrance, as he had waited for an emergency before supplying himself with ammunition.

The first swoop of the savage riders closed all avenues for escaping unobserved. To sally out in a body imperfectly armed, with no common point of rally or known place of safety, was to invite extermination from an overwhelming force eagerly watching for such an opportunity. The ground floor of the hotel was devoted to storerooms, and the broad stairway leading up to the hotel department offered an admirable opportunity for defense against assault. This, with the unknown and probably overestimated force for resistance which it might contain, saved it from attack. But a vigilant watch was kept upon it. The bushwhackers' code of warfare forbade unnecessary exposure, as redemption of prisoners was impracticable, and wounded comrades would be a fatal hindrance to the rapidity of their movements. Both cellars and stairways were cautiously approached and seldom entered by them. Fire was a more effective as well as a safer weapon than revolvers in such cases. The band, drawn together by criminal instincts and beastly passions, on the first taste of blood gave rein to individual caprice, many of them indulging boastfully in a gluttony of blood. To Quantrill and the less brutal of his followers it was the abundant booty, the hundred columns of curling smoke clouding the sky, the heavens licked by mammoth tongues of flame, the fiery eruptions of burning buildings announcing the complete control of the destroying element, the fierce crackling of a multitude of fires, the muffled thunder of falling walls, and the smoking ruins of a demolished city, glorying in its name and loyalty, that offered the crowning triumph of their hazardous expedition.

A review of the situation made it apparent that indiscriminate killing, only so far as to prevent resistance, except in the case of soldiers, "red-legs" and certain proscribed individuals, was an incident rather than a purpose. But the line between incident and purpose was shadowy and left to be determined by individual caprice. As it was apparent that any show of resistance could only hasten impending doom and aggravate the assailants, it seemed to be the instinct of all to accept their fate and wait with a blind hope for some turn of events. Nothing seen or heard from without gave any hope other than of fate deferred. One or two who had escaped from their pursuers and found temporary refuge in the hotel only added to the gloom by accounts of indiscriminate killing, not excepting those who had surrendered or made no attempt to escape.

The rear windows of the hotel commanded a view of west Lawrence and gave safe points for observation. No shade trees obstructed the vision, and Central park was a ravine with scattering trees, filled with a growth of underbrush. From the upper hall and windows could be seen squads of riders dashing around from point to point, seemingly in a mad chase after game, with fugitives in a race for life, making for the brushy ravines. A striking feature of the heartless scene was a lady in a riding habit, contrasting with the careless and dingy garb of her escort, accompanying a squad and seeming to lead them, riding with the abandon

of the boldest raider, and skurrying from house to house, parleying at each in her circuit of dwellings in west Lawrence. She proved to be Sally Young, a seamstress who held a situation at the Eldridge House. She had been enjoying an early horseback ride with S. S. Horton, and was cut off by a band of raiders closing around the town. Her escort eluding his pursuers and escaping into the country, she submitted to capture, and by her dashing fearlessness won over her captors and drew upon their gallantry for the protection of a list of assumed "brothers," "brothers-in-law," "cousins" and "kinsfolk," embracing all the families of her acquaintance whose names she could recall—among them, Governor Shannon, W. H. R. Lykins and "Jimmy" Christian.

Meanwhile the raiders, singly, in pairs and in squads, were scouring the whole region within view, riding at the top of their speed with a dash and a reckless swagger that comes only through wild training in the saddle. Their readiness in the handling of arms had been acquired in its perfection in a life on the lawless border. Their horses, too, seemed to be imbued with the spirit of their masters, and bore their riders through the carnage almost without guidance. Only such horses could serve in such a raid and only such riders would dare to undertake it.

The open ground north of Winthrop street was largely set with a rank growth of jimson weeds, affording friendly shelter to a score of fugitives as they dodged from clump to clump, seeking safety in the ravine or over the steep bank of the river. Among these was recognized E. R. Falley, sergeant of one of the military companies, who had run the gantlet, as he afterward explained, attempting to reach the house of Lieut. Fred Kimball to obtain the key to the armory for the rallying of his company. He was cut off by horsemen dashing by, and hiding in a thicket of weeds, he escaped, but without accomplishing his purpose.

Dr. J. F. Griswold lived at the corner of Indiana and Winthrop streets. With him boarded Josiah Trask, editor of the *Journal*, Professor and State Senator S. M. Thorpe, and H. W. Baker, of the firm of Ridenour & Baker. These four were seen, after parleying with a band, leaving the premises, seemingly under guard, and going in the direction of the Eldridge House. They had gone but a short distance when a squad of horsemen that had been scouring the region north of Winthrop street dashed upon them and shot them down. Those in charge seemed to make no effort for their protection, but rode off in search of other victims. As human life seemed to be the aim of every shot, the wounded were not spared but were only the easier victims, and the only hope for the wounded lay in feigning death. Even a wife's entreaties were powerless to move, and her ministrations only served to direct the attention of some fiend to another victim. When their wives could prudently approach them, Doctor Griswold and Mr. Trask were found to have been instantly killed, Mr. Thorpe mortally wounded, and Mr. Baker shot through the lungs and otherwise wounded. Thorpe's life was prolonged, though with great suffering, for a day or two, and Mr. Baker saved only by skillful medical treatment and careful nursing.

One block north of Doctor Griswold's, on the corner of Louisiana and Pinckney streets, was the dwelling of Mayor G. W. Collamore. Here a

larger squad made a raid upon the house, and after parleying, part of them entered, and soon a smoke began to issue, and in a little time the dwelling was wrapped in flames. This seemed to be a signal for a general conflagration, as columns of smoke soon began to rise in every direction. General Collamore was awakened by the storm that was passing around him, and with Pat Keefe, who was living with him, had just time, as he saw the raiders approaching in front, to conceal himself in a dry well in the rear of the dwelling. The gases from the burning building, however, suffocated them; also, J. G. Lowe, who went down into the well to rescue them, was overcome and taken out dead. It was a portion of this band that made the attack on the prisoners from Doctor Griswold's.

While these atrocities were being perpetrated in view of the hotel, those barred from escape within it were also shut out from every glimpse of encouragement from without. The milder features of the massacre, if there were any, could not be learned. Only the most atrocious could be known. The few who in their flight escaped into the hotel could only add to the lists of the dead and the tales of horror. Yet this condition of prolonged torture, though most fully realized, was borne by all the imprisoned company with stoical submission—either the confidence of blind hope or the calmness of despair—a feature that prevailed throughout the community. The calamity had burst upon all with such sudden and unconceived force and flashed with such terror that the will was subdued and the emotions paralyzed. Not until the storm of carnage, plundering and conflagration had swept by, the full extent of the calamity been realized, and the smoking stillness of desolation closed over the ruins, did the human emotions find free expression.

An exception to this was in the case of certain strangers who arrived from the East the previous evening. When they had been wakened by the gong, which they mistook for the preliminary call for breakfast, and discovered that what they took for a "wild West" celebration was the furor of a massacre, they paced the corridors, upbraiding the authorities for not suppressing the riot, and besought "some one to call upon the mayor to surrender the town and stop the butchery." Mr. Babcock, on being appealed to by them, replied: "These are not rebel soldiers, but bushwhackers; they are not human, but savage beasts. You can see they are giving no quarter, and to surrender is to be butchered that much faster."

The failure all this time to attack the hotel or attempt to enter it was taken as evidence that it was the plan of Quantrill to leave the Eldridge House for the final performance on his program, guarding against the escape of its inmates and leaving the flames to reduce it. Under these considerations the importunities of the strangers were at last heeded, and Capt. A. R. Banks displayed a sheet from an upper window. Quantrill himself appeared. The defenseless condition of the hotel was explained and a surrender made on the condition of the safety of the occupants, a guard to be given for their protection. On taking possession all the inmates were ordered to the lower corridors, where at the foot of the stairway two guards were stationed, who relieved them of

their valuables as they passed down—in this case, it is only fair to say, without rudeness or search, greatly in contrast to the general practice. A corps of pillagers made the round of the rooms, appropriating whatever they cared to carry away. One of the guests, J. M. Winchell, was required to give up a fine new coat which he was wearing, but after he had surrendered it he bought it back, to the gratification of both parties, with a ten-dollar bill. In like cases occurring outside both money and life were taken without any return.

"Uncle Joe Keeler," a thrifty employee of the hotel, who was nursing a hundred dollars in gold as a growing investment at that time, sought to save it by throwing it up through the trap door onto the roof. As a careful search among the ashes of the hotel afterward failed to discover any trace of it, it was doubtless melted into a nugget and sought its birthplace in the bowels of the earth. The strangers who had been so clamorous to surrender the town did not seem to regard the conditions as applicable to themselves. They locked themselves in their rooms and attempted to hold the doors against the squad of pillagers making the rounds of the hotel. A shot through the panel, that went through the thigh of one of them, quickly opened the door, as well as their eyes to the true condition of affairs.

E. D. Thompson, one of the guests of the hotel, on realizing the true situation, struck out through the back area, which was inclosed by an eight-foot board fence. Though small of stature he was an athlete, and with a handspring cleared the inclosure and ran for the brush in the ravine, now Central park, some two hundred yards distant.

The fires that had been set to all the business houses on the street, as the pillaging of the stores was completed, were now threatening the hotel. The law office of ex-Governor Shannon, in one of the Winthrop street rooms on the ground floor, had been set on fire. The drug store of Prentiss & Griswold, directly under the sitting room and corridor, was in flames, and with its contents threatening an explosion that would involve the guards as well as the guests. This fact communicated to the startled guards caused a hasty summons for Quantrill, who gave permission for the release of the prisoners. But in retreating from a threatening danger they stepped into an immediate and more startling one. The filing out of the prisoners into the street was the signal for a rush upon them from all directions. They had hardly got out of the hotel when they were surrounded by a mob—its fury stimulated by the contents of the saloons—that came dashing up with shouts and yells, flourishing revolvers and clamoring for blood. It was with difficulty that the guard prevented a general onslaught upon the prisoners, and their only chance of safety lay in retaining the guards. Quantrill was again called for, and gave orders for them to be taken to an open space, where there was a circus ring, on the corner of Winthrop and New Hampshire streets. Thither they were escorted by the clamorous mob with curses, threats and abuse, and that most common and forcible gesticulation of the border ruffian, the flourish and clicking of revolvers.

On the way one of the newly arrived guests, carrying his carpet bag, which he had not forgotten in his excitement, attracted the attention of



one of the raiders, who demanded, "Where did you come from?" On his replying "New York," and that he had never been in Kansas before the previous night, he was answered by a shot from the ruffian's revolver, which he narrowly escaped by thrusting himself against the wretch's horse, thus disturbing his aim, the ball striking the ground at his feet.

During the lull in the storm, while the mass were engaged in plundering, and only desultory shots told of the continuance of the massacre, a loose gang of riders were scouring the field, seemingly in search of adventure, alert to every sound and ever ready to set out in the direction indicated, like a company of hunters, strenuous to be in at the death. The shot at the New York man drew them to the scene, flushed with exultation, having now no fear of resistance—a new pack drawn to the scene by their thirst for blood. Again it was with the utmost difficulty that the guards were able to restrain them from an indiscriminate onslaught. They denounced the guarding of the prisoners as an outrage; "they had not been brought here to guard them, but to wipe them out." So imminent was the danger of a massacre that the guard signaled to Quantrill, who at this time was sitting on his horse in full view, talking with the ladies who stood in the door of the City hotel. On his riding up he was met with a clash of demands, the guard demanding to know if he had not given orders for the protection of the prisoners, and the gang clamoring to attack them. Quantrill avowed that as they had surrendered he had pledged them protection, and with a tone and imprecation that quelled opposition, he swore that he would do it if he had to kill every man that interfered. Then for more easy security he ordered the prisoners to be taken to the City hotel, where they were waited upon for contributions of such articles of jewelry as had escaped the observation of the Eldridge House guard.

While guarded upon the vacant lot, there occurred, in full view, one of the many scenes of atrocity that made the events of that day indelible. J. W. Thornton was living in a cottage on Winthrop street, having removed from Missouri, where he had become obnoxious on account of his avowed loyalty. The houses in the vicinity were burning, and while engaged in saving his household goods one of the raiders shot him. He staggered forward and was shot again, and as he fell and rose, staggering through a gate and crawling around the house the villain followed him, shooting as he went. From the other side of the house, shots and shrieks were heard. The assassin returned, leaving his victim for dead. With six wounds, any one of which would ordinarily prove fatal, he lay for months in helpless misery on the brink of the grave, but finally recovered to live for years a helpless cripple.

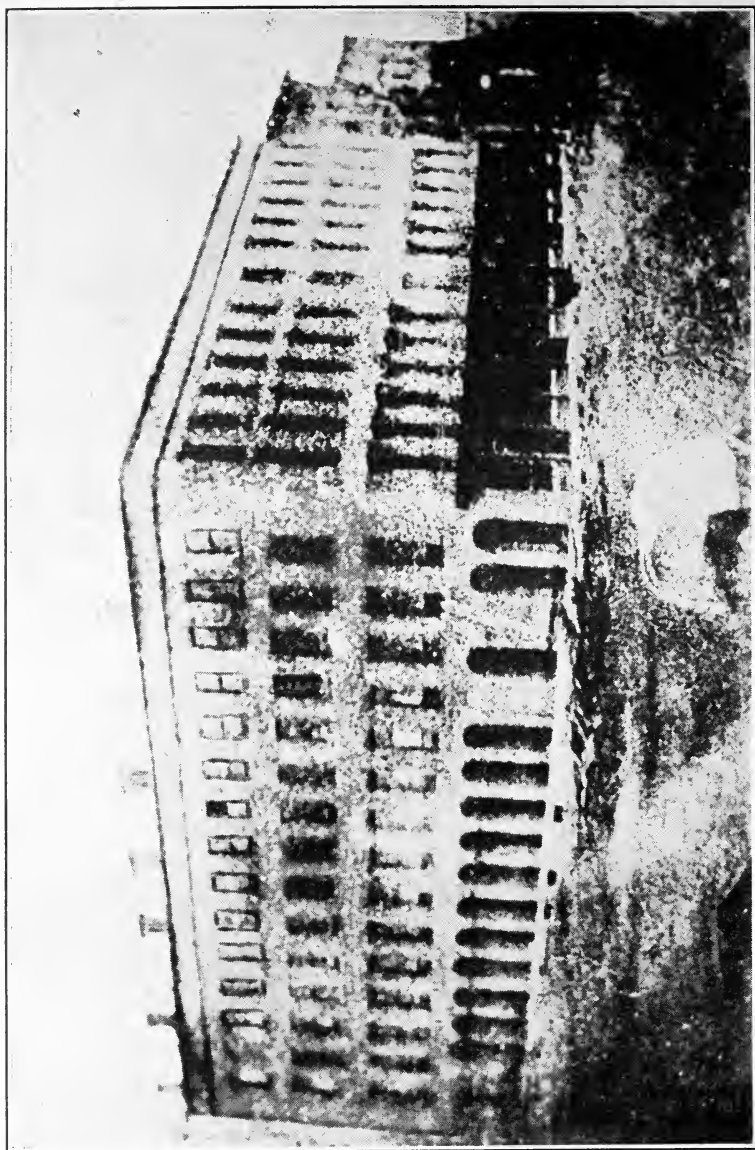
The City hotel, with the new consignment of prisoners, was now crowded to its full capacity and gave an opportunity to learn much that had not already been observed, yet the extent of the calamity could be inferred only from the smoking columns seen rising over every quarter of the town. From this point only an occasional glimpse of the movements could be had, and it was not observed that the guard, who had never made themselves conspicuous, had been withdrawn until two horsemen, inferred to be a relief, rode up and ordered all the occupants to



come out into the area. Their brutal manner, contrasting with those of the previous guards, foreboding evil, there was hesitation in obeying. But on a threat to fire into the crowd, and a movement to execute it, part of the prisoners stepped out and were formed in a row along the narrow porch. Both these men were typical bushwhackers. The more conspicuous of the two was a man of middle age, of athletic build, muscular and burly, with massive head and bushy, grizzled hair, rough, bearded face and grim features. His natural savagery, expressed in every lineament, excited by the scenes of the day, had also been stimulated by liquor. Mounted on a splendid white horse that he had taken from the stables of Mr. Perry, that chafed and pranced under him, he delivered a harangue to his intended victims, filled with oaths and imprecations and accentuated in border-ruffian fashion with flourishes of his revolver. As he closed his harangue and commenced to execute his threats, Mr. Stone, the proprietor, came to the door and called to him that "Colonel Quantrill had given orders for the protection of all the inmates of the house." His reply was a shot through the body that proved fatal within an hour. Three others were shot, one fatally, and two had flesh wounds.

With the shooting the hotel was quickly emptied through the back windows, the porch cleared suddenly, and all sought safety under the bank of the river. Some skirted the bank eastward to the timber and others crossed on the ferryboat that lay on the opposite side. A squad of soldiers stationed for the protection of the Delaware lands, with a few settlers armed with rifles, had kept the bank clear of raiders by firing at every horseman that came in view.

On returning to the ruins of the town it was found that the two assailants were not a relief guard, but a pair of the most reckless of the desperadoes who had run amuck, and on the departure of the band had struck out on a supplementary tour of robbery and murder. The man on the white horse it was afterward learned was named Larkin M. Skaggs. On setting out on his independent raid he first attacked S. A. Riggs on Rhode Island street, who was saved only by the heroic conduct of his wife, who rushed out and seized the horse's bridle, and, clinging to it, frustrated the assassin's aim until her husband escaped. George Burt, with others, was standing in the street near by watching the band as they were moving away. The man on the white horse rode up to him and at the point of a revolver demanded his money. Burt, who was a wealthy money loaner, handed over his pocketbook containing some \$600. The raider took it with one hand and at the same moment shot him through the heart with the other. He then rode off and was joined by a companion, when they made the assault upon the company at the City hotel. His previous exploits cannot be traced; that his course was one of fiendish murder throughout may be inferred from these known acts at the close of his bloody career. He had filled his cup to the full and was compelled to drink it, draining it to the bitterest dregs. After the shooting at the City hotel his companion was lost sight of and probably overtook the main body on their retreat southward. But the man on the white horse, either from bewilderment or not knowing the course taken by Quantrill, set out in the direction from which the band had entered



ELDRIDGE HOUSE, 1863.

the town. He was discovered and given chase by a party coming to join in pursuit of the raiders, and attempted to escape in the direction of Eudora. Here the mettle of his horse served him well, carrying him through fields and brakes, clearing fences at a bound, and would have foiled his pursuers but for other volunteers who intercepted him in a lane. Taken prisoner, he was disarmed and led back to Lawrence. Arriving at the outskirts of town, his captors, finding that a company were starting in pursuit of the main body, and learning the horrors of the raid and not wishing to be encumbered with their prisoner, the vengeance that he had meted to others was visited upon him, and his body was left on the prairie, the avengers hastening to join the company in pursuit of Quantrill. Nor did vengeance stop with his execution. While all who would have interfered, had they known it, were engrossed in their own griefs or caring for the wounded and dead, some negro men, who recognized him, dragged his body with a long rope at the tail of a horse to the ravine in what is now Central park, and burned it.<sup>77</sup> An ignominy well befitting the subject of it, but a blot on those who inflicted it, excused only by the oppressive sense of the surrounding horrors.

Returning to the smoking ruins of the Eldridge House to learn the fate of the other inmates, it was found that all the employees who were astir at the first alarm had made their escape, and were safe. Joseph Eldridge, who was missing when the building was evacuated, was found to have been shot in the cheek as he was leaving by the back door, but he had been able to crawl into a shed adjoining the barn in the rear and conceal himself under straw until danger was over. A negro babe had suffocated. It had been committed to the care of one of the ladies by its mother when she made her escape, and was left sleeping in an upper room, forgotten in the excitement of the hour, until the flames rising through the roof recalled the charge to the lady too late. A clothing merchant who had occupied one of the storerooms under the hotel had perished, as was afterward revealed by the charred bones found in removing the debris for rebuilding.

Close to the rear of the hotel and in command of its upper windows had occurred one of the bloodiest scenes that marked that morning of carnage. On the opposite side of Vermont street stood the dwelling of R. C. Dix, with the Johnson House on the south, and on the north a large wagon shop in which he had built up an extensive business. Some eight or ten of the hands employed in the shops boarded with Mrs. Dix. The Johnson House, second in accommodations to the Eldridge, was known as the stopping place of the "red-legs" when in town. The company at Mrs. Dix's, that had been nonplussed by the first onslaught of the raiders, had their doubts removed by a negro rushing by them between the buildings on a race for life, and calling to Mr. Dix as he passed, "The secesh are here!" This company, like others, were defenseless, having returned their guns to the armory; but they might have saved themselves by immediate flight. Mr. Dix refused to avail himself of the chance, waiting with his employees to join others, should there be

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77. This account of the killing of Skaggs does not agree with John Speer's. See Connelley's "Quantrill and the Border Wars," 1910, pp. 381 and 392.

an opportunity to rally for defense, believing, as everyone else did, that only obnoxious persons would be killed if not resisting, and that the raiders would be satisfied with plundering and burning. But the sudden dash cut off all chance of arming or defense, and the falling victims proved that merciless slaughter had been planned as the prelude to the tragedy. He avoided observation by remaining close in his house till ordered out, and surrendered on promise of personal safety, hoping to propitiate his captors by giving up nearly \$1,000 which he was saving for the payment of his employees. With others he was placed under guard.

Simultaneously an onslaught was made on the Johnson House, and though no "red-legs" were known to be in town, and certainly none fell victims, the fierce vindictiveness of the raiders showed that they held all the inmates of the house responsible for them, and that they were to be shot down without mercy. Part of Mr. Dix's company had sought refuge there. His brother Stephen was shot through the head as he attempted to escape through the back door of the hotel, his brains falling into the hands of Mrs. Dix as she sought to ease his position where he had fallen on the steps. His brother Frank was shot three times and left for dead, but dragged himself to a well under the shop, into which he descended, but nearly perished from chills and loss of blood. He was taken out and revived with difficulty, and carried a broken constitution through the remainder of his life.

R. C. Dix, trusting in the repeated assurances of safety from one of his guard, declined the entreaties of his wife to attempt to escape in the midst of this riot of murder, feeling that to do so would forfeit his only chance of life. Suddenly, by a seeming possession of a demon of blood, two of the guard began shooting, and all the prisoners fell, seven of them dead, and one, Mr. Hampson, wounded but feigning death until danger was past.

All over the area bounded by Massachusetts, Tennessee, Winthrop and Henry streets were trails of the bloody fiends. In what is now Central park, where many found refuge by concealment in the thickets, others were flushed, to be killed by the fiendish hunters or shot like game under cover.

By the rear doorway of the store of Duncan & Allison lay the body of D. C. Allison, who had been brought from the room where he had slept to unlock the safe, containing some \$13,000 in money. After emptying the safe and setting fire to the store the fiends rewarded his compliance with murder.

In the store of T. B. Eldridge and George Ford, in the middle of the block on Massachusetts street, were two young clerks, James Eldridge, a nephew of one of the proprietors, and James Perrine, who were found sleeping in the store. As the key of the safe was kept by one of the proprietors, they were promised protection if they would obtain it. But after it had been brought by one of them under guard, and the safe opened, both were shot dead and left on the floor. Further back lay the body of John L. Crane, who had been shot down as he was attempting to escape.

On the sidewalk and in the doorways all the way of the block were the charred remains of other human victims, most of them recognizable only by their location and the knowledge of adjoining occupants who had escaped.

In the center of this field of blood and smoking ruins stood the Methodist Episcopal church, now the residence of Mrs. Summerfield. Here by evening was gathered part of the harvest of death. Laid out on the floor for recognition and preparation for burial, and occupying the whole room, with only necessary passageways between, were forty dead bodies, numbered and with names placed upon them so far as identified—an indelible impression burned in upon the mind, though only one page in the record of that morning's fiendish work.

Of the whole number of dead only one quarter is here named; of the wounded, but a bare mention; of the robbery and destruction, but a sample; of the desolate homes, but a hint. The silent anguish, too intense for tears and too profound for utterance, it is vain to attempt to portray. It can be comprehended only by those who have passed through such an experience. Even the milder features of the tragedy, if there were any that could be called such, had in them an element of alarm and a flash of impending danger that was magnified by the horror of the scenes witnessed and the dreaded uncertainty of the outcome. To give a full account of the distracting terrors of that day would be to relate the separate story of every one of the survivors, as each had his own thrilling experience, and to question the dead, as many of the victims were dispatched, leaving no witness of their ordeal of blood. While all the deeds were atrocities, each was marked by its own special feature, and to rehearse the story in all its details would be a surfeit of horrors. Some of the most aggravated cases—that of Mr. E. P. Fitch, whose dead body the murderers prevented his wife from removing from his burning house; of Judge Carpenter, who when he lay mortally wounded was dispatched by an assassin under the prostrate form of his wife attempting to shield him; and of D. W. Palmer, the gunsmith, and his companions, who when wounded were bound together and thrown into his burning shop, confined there till consumed—these and many others are related by Rev. Dr. Cordley in his "History of Lawrence."

When the work of the day entailed upon the survivors—gathering up the dead and finding shelter for the living—was done, an oppressive quiet as of death settled upon the ruins. The few faint lights glimmering from the decimated dwellings only added gloom. The business portion of the town was a scene of appalling desolation. From the middle of the block next the river there stood only four buildings on Massachusetts street, two of brick on the west side, and two small ones, a stone and a frame, on the east. All else were heaps of smoldering ruins, ashes where wooden buildings had stood, and piles of debris blocking the street where had been brick or stone. On Vermont street the scene was less appalling only from being less extensive. Ruin spread over all the residence portion of the town, and smoking embers, revived into flame by the passing breeze, marked spots where in the morning had been happy homes. The stillness was broken now and then by wails of lamentation and cries of agony,

suppressed in the hour of infliction, that had found utterance when the nervous tension had relaxed, or that had been called out by the painful services of surgeons probing and dressing wounds. Pervading all was the smell of fire, with the fumes of countless substances consumed in the smoldering ruins. Repulsive odors of burning flesh rose from the livery barns where horses had perished. And as if to impress the scene of desolation upon all the senses, flocks of killdeers, that by some mysterious attraction had been drawn to explore this field of smoking ruins, as they flew from place to place piped their plaintive notes—a mournful requiem.

When the shock of the disaster was over and people came together to discover its extent it was found that the city government had been disabled by the death of the mayor and a majority of the council, and so was unable to take action. Therefore, the caring for the suffering and the dead, where personal friends were wanting, was assumed by a volunteer committee. Only by a week's labor were the dead gathered together and laid away. They had been found scattered over the town and about the suburbs. In one place seventeen could have been seen at one view— young patriots whose ardor for their country had marked them for a sacrifice. In another place lay five in a heap; not far distant a cluster of eight bodies showed the fiendish work of assassins. Fallen upon the prairie, hidden among the weeds and underbrush lay others, and charred remains were recovered with painful searching from the heated ruins of buildings. Six weeks later two bodies were taken from a well into which they had gone for concealment, and had been crushed by the fall of the burning windlass. Nor were all the dead recovered nor the fate of all those missing ever known. Some had been resolved into ashes so completely as to leave no means of recognition. Of two boys, John M. Speer, son of John Speer of the *Tribune*, and David Purinton, who had slept in the *Republican* printing office, no trace could ever be found.

So complete had been the destruction of material that only rude boxes of rough lumber, fastened with burned nails from the ruins of a hardware store, could be had for coffins. The demands of nature to resolve the bodies to their primitive dust would not permit the delay necessary to obtain better ones, or even to give to each a separate burial. So in a long trench on the bluffs, the old burial ground one mile west of the University, were laid away fifty-three bodies side by side, with their places marked by numbers to identify them.

All the remains of the victims not taken to other burial grounds were afterward removed to Oak Hill cemetery, where thirty-three years after the massacre a suitable monument was erected to their memory.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE PRICE RAID.

FOLLOWING the Quantrill massacre, the year 1864 was one of increasing prosperity on the frontier. The seasons were favorable for all crops. Kansas was the base of supplies for the army of the border and for the numerous Indian tribes, some of whom, driven from their homes in the South for their loyalty, by the Rebellion, had become wholly dependent on the government for their support. All the vast territory extending south and west to Santa Fe and northwest to Salt Lake was dotted with military posts, Indian agencies and trading posts, that drew their supplies from this base. Traffic with the mines of Colorado had grown to large proportions. The Santa Fe trade had been diverted by the Rebellion from Independence and Kansas City to Leavenworth. All this enormous traffic of the plains—that, held for a generation, had built up and enriched western Missouri, but lost to it by the Rebellion—was now transferred to Kansas, and falling into the hands of loyal citizens, was concentrated mainly at Leavenworth. Its transportation employed literally thousands of wagons and train men and tens of thousands of oxen, with thousands of government mules. In the grazing season its caravans lined with endless procession the long stretches of the primitive highways, many of them exhausting a season in a trip, furnishing an advantageous home market, absorbing the entire products of the state. The main value of this traffic lay in the transportation. The contract rates—\$2.25 per hundred pounds per hundred miles—regulated the whole traffic. With its expanding volume it drew around it as a core the whole business of the state, with lavish disbursement of government funds, as well as profitable employment of capital and remunerative employment of labor. Added to this the spoils of war, in confiscated stock of rebels, helped to repair the ravages of the guerrillas and the paralysis of the exposed border.

A confident feeling of security had been restored by General Ewing's order No. 11, concentrating the population of the border counties of Missouri under military observation and stamping out guerrilla warfare. The rebel forces had been driven far south to the region of the Red river. Arkansas had been reclaimed and reorganized with a Union government, to serve as a barrier against their return. General Steele, with the army that had driven the rebels before him, was at Little Rock; Gen. H. S. Ewing in Southeast Missouri, General Rosecrans at St. Louis, General Curtis at Leavenworth, and General Blunt patrolling the border.

With such an ample area in front begirt with troops, the disaster to the Red river expedition under Banks, and the consequent reverses of Steele's columns—as he was compelled to fall back upon Little Rock by the very forces that he had driven before him the previous autumn—



were incidents regarded as too distant to cause alarm. But they had a sequel.

It was in the midst of the rejoicing on the Thanksgiving proclamation of Lincoln for the deadly blows at the vitals of the Confederacy given by Sherman at Atlanta and Farragut on the defenses of Mobile, that ominous reports were received of an aggressive movement of Price, and of Shelby and Marmaduke marauding in Arkansas and invading Missouri from the south. General Ewing, after a brave resistance at Pilot Knob, had been forced to spike his heavy guns, blow up his magazine and retreat to Rolla, while Price passed by him. With an audacity that bespoke an unrevealed purpose, Price was pushing westward, threatening St. Louis, and seeming to dare an attack by Rosecrans upon his flank and rear. But Rosecrans could not accept the challenge. The demands from other departments had taken from him most of his seasoned troops and left him to rely largely upon an undisciplined militia, in which there was an element that could not be trusted. There also existed a treacherous faction in the northwestern counties of Missouri numbering 2,800, enrolled as home guards, whose main exercise was in harassing Union men, and they were suspected of a design to join Price as soon as he should make the opportunity. To increase his embarrassment, it was discovered by Rosecrans, through secret emissaries admitted to their lodges, that more than 20,000 members of the "Knights of the Golden Circle" were organized in waiting to swell the force of the invaders.

The first open response of these secret allies to Price's advent, beckoning him westward, was an outbreak in Platte county, followed by a succession of guerrilla outrages of increasing atrocity in the river counties of north Missouri.<sup>78</sup>

The massing of Rosecrans' disjointed forces for an effective movement

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78. Rosecrans in his official report of the Price invasion, says:

"... While Ewing's fight was going on Shelby advanced in Potosi, and thence to Big river bridge, threatening General Smith's advance, which withdrew from that point to within safer supporting distance of his main position at De Soto. Previous to and pending these events the guerrilla warfare in north Missouri had been waging with redoubled fury. Rebel agents, amnesty oath-takers, recruits, sympathizers, O. A. K's, and traitors of every hue and stripe, had warmed into life at the approach of the invasion. Women's fingers were busy making clothes for rebel soldiers out of goods plundered by the guerrillas; women's tongues were busy telling Union neighbors 'their time was now coming.' General Fisk with all his force had been scouring the brush for weeks in the river counties in pursuit of hostile bands, composed largely of recruits from among that class of inhabitants who claim protection, yet decline to perform the full duty of citizens on the ground that they 'never tuck no sides.' A few facts will convey some idea of this warfare carried on by Confederate agents here. . . . These gangs of rebels, whose families have been living in peace among their loyal neighbors, committed the most cold-blooded and diabolical murders, such as riding up to a farmhouse, asking for water, and, while receiving it, shooting down the giver, an aged, inoffensive farmer, because he was a radical 'Union man.' In the single subdistrict of Mexico its commanding officer furnished a list of near 100 Union men who in the course of six weeks had been killed, maimed or 'run off' because they were 'radical Union men or damned abolitionists.'

"About the 1st of September Anderson's gang attacked a railroad train on the North Missouri road, took from it twenty-two unarmed soldiers, many on sick leave, and after robbing placed them in a row and shot them in cold blood. Some of the bodies they scalped, and put others across the track and ran the engine over them. On the 27th this gang, with numbers swollen to 300 or 400, attacked Major Johnston with about 120 men of the Thirty-ninth Missouri volunteer infantry, raw recruits, and, after stampeding their horses, shot every man, most of them in cold blood. Anderson a few days later was recognized by General Price at Boonville as Confederate captain, and with a verbal admonition to behave himself, ordered by Colonel MacLean [of LeCompton candle-box notoriety], chief of Price's staff, to proceed to north Missouri and destroy the railroads, which orders were found on the miscreant when killed by Lieutenant Colonel Cox about the 27th of October ultimo."—"War of Rebellion Records," series 1, vol. 41, part 1, p. 308 *et seq.*



giving Price a week's advantage, he pushed westward, burning bridges behind him, followed cautiously by an inferior Union force numbering some 6,000, under Gen. A. J. Smith, as a trailer. Burning the intensely loyal German town of Herman, on the Missouri river, he brushed by Jefferson City, driving its garrison of some 6,700, after a skirmish, back behind their intrenchments and holding them in durance until his trains had passed safely beyond their reach. He baffled his pursuers, that had now joined in the chase with cavalry, infantry and artillery, and by steamboat—foraging as he went, replenishing his stores and swelling his ranks with the bands that had been awaiting his advent.

As yet the rapid and unimpeded advance of the invaders, fragmentary reports of which came only from points of contact on the Missouri river, created no alarm in Kansas, but rather a feeling of satisfaction that a formidable force, that had been unassailable in the morasses of the Red river, had run into a trap that would assure its certain and easy destruction. But a bold dash of General Shelby across the Missouri river at Arrow Rock, with his capture of Glasgow and three regiments of Missouri and Illinois troops, with the absence of news from any pursuing force, aroused the border from its quiet sense of security. The rapidity of Price's advance, with his avoiding rather than accepting conflict with the Union forces, was evidence that his expedition was not a military campaign, but a predatory raid, that had in it more terror than the deliberate clash of hostile armies. From the direction of his unhesitating movements, his design of sweeping around westward on his retreat and making Kansas the triumphant close of his circuit of spoliation, was of easy military demonstration.

Shelby's daring feat called up afresh the guerrilla raids of '63, with presages of like dashes by the bands that were hovering around it, as the main body moved in its predetermined circuit.

Price's feint against Jefferson City was on the 7th of October. By the 8th the danger to Kansas had become so threatening that Governor Carney called out the whole of the militia—"every man from 16 to 60." General Curtis, who had waited on more authentic advices, followed the next day, summoning the whole of the troops under his command to the resistance of Price; and on the following day declared martial law. The memories of '63 and the passing exigencies of the case brought every man to "shoulder arms" in response to the governor's call. They replied with a quickness and unanimity that placed them, for self-sacrifice and patriotism and prompt activity, above those of every other state under like conditions, shaming the citizens of those states harassed by the Morgan raid and by the rebel invasion of Pennsylvania.

With no railroads save the forty miles of the Kansas Pacific, then built only from Kansas City to Lawrence, to facilitate the movement of troops, within a week 10,000 of the militia were massed on the border, besides some 2,600 stationed at interior points. All this from a population that a month later at an exciting election cast only 18,036 votes for governor. All business throughout the state was suspended and the teams and wagons of the country were pressed into service in rushing troops to the front. The whole arms-bearing population were mobilized and an

army of farmers, mechanics and business men, bankers, ministers, lawyers and doctors were hastening to the front, each calling ambitious to show a full representation. Lawrence furnished five companies, two of which it was considered prudent to station in the town to ward against such a catastrophe as had occurred the previous year. These went into camp by the blockhouses—two had been built in Massachusetts street after the Quantrill raid, one at the crossing of Berkley, the other at Henry street—and spent their time in drill and guard duty.

Since his departure westward from Jefferson City, no tidings could be heard of Price. This was taken to mean that he was outgeneraling Rosecrans and eluding Pleasonton. What knowledge the commanders may have had was guarded with military secrecy and the public left to its own conclusions. It was not till the 19th that General Blunt developed him at Lexington, still pushing westward with a force and assurance that could not be diverted from his aim, compelling the Kansas brigade to fall back as they withstood him at every point of advantage, from Lexington, Little Blue and Independence to the Big Blue. Here, with the Kansas militia and the forces under General Curtis, a united effort was made to check his advance until General Pleasonton, who was believed to be not far in his rear, should overtake him.

The Big Blue, with its deep bed and steep banks lined with a dense growth of timber, afforded a strong line of defense, and the movement of the united forces under Curtis was for the purpose of holding the crossings. As an aide on General Deitzler's staff who had command of the militia, I was ordered, with 100 men, to barricade the road leading to the lower crossing by felling trees across it, the dense forest and steep banks making the river impassable for an army except where the road had been cut through. All the night preceding the battle the hundred axes were kept busy felling trees into the road, and by morning the blockade was so complete that no army could force it. An upper crossing, however, had not been so well protected, and there fell the brunt of the battle, the rebels forcing the passage after stubborn resistance by Kansas troops.

The battle of Westport, which followed, was the pivotal engagement of the campaign. Price, attempting to escape from his pursuers who were pressing on his flank and in his rear, though confronted by five Kansas regiments—the Eleventh, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth—under Blunt, and 10,000 militia under Deitzler, fighting on the threshold of the state with desperate valor, guarding their homes, was driving the Kansas troops back by the vigor of his assault, when Pleasonton's batteries opened upon him and sent him skurrying southward with Curtis, and Pleasonton in pursuit. After a chase of sixty miles he was overtaken on the Marais des Cygnes and aroused from his bivouac by a salvo of artillery at four o'clock in the morning, and took to flight. Turning at bay at the Little Osage, he showed fight with his forces drawn up behind a line of eight cannon, only to court a crushing defeat. A charge of two brigades of Pleasonton's forces, superbly executed, broke his lines, with the loss of all his cannon, 1,000 prisoners—among them Major General Marmaduke, Brigadier General Cabel and five colonels—

quota of small arms, colors and transportations. Rallying his scattered forces a few miles in advance he made another stand, only to be again routed and pursued until darkness gave him a respite, his trail lighted up by the burning wrecks of his abandoned wagons.

As speed was the main factor in his operations, he winded Pleasonton, who was forced to halt at Fort Scott and recruit his cavalry, worn out by forced marches of more than 400 miles from St. Louis, leaving Blunt and the Kansas troops, with two other brigades with less worn cavalry, to trail the flying invaders.

At Newtonia, near the southwest corner of Missouri, Price was again forced to battle by Blunt, who attacked him with a greatly inferior force, but with threatening change of fortune, until Sanborn's brigade, that had marched 102 miles in thirty-six hours, came on the field and turned the tide of victory and once more put him to flight.

His last halt was made at Fayetteville, Ark., where an advance division of his army had joined in the siege of that town, held by a Union force. But Curtis, coming up a day behind him, rescued the town and drove him further southward with severe punishment, compelling him to close his circuit with an army demoralized by an unbroken succession of flights and defeats, dwindling by capture and desertion, with the loss of his artillery, the enforced destruction of most of his transportation, and stripped of his spoils. It was thus, after an active and most efficient career, that he passed out of observation as a factor in the Rebellion.

But to return to Lawrence. The report of the failure of the Kansas troops to hold Price in check on the Blue reached Lawrence early in the night, the utter absence of any news from Pleasonton increasing the alarm, which was intensified through the night by details of the defeat brought in by self-dispatched messengers. "No word from Pleasonton"; "our forces are defeated and the road through Kansas is free to Price"—these unauthorized reports were more readily accepted, as an official message had been received the evening before requiring the whole military force to be held in constant readiness for action. The companies at Lawrence had slept on their arms, and once in the night had been called out on what proved to be a false alarm of an approaching force a few miles distant.

It was not until the morning following that this strain of anxiety was relieved. On the arrival of myself and Governor Robinson, who had been sent as bearers of the message, I was able to report that General Pleasonton had been heard from and that he was hourly expected to make the attack upon Price. Later in the day came the news of victory and of the rebel army fleeing southward, and Lawrence began to laugh at her fears.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### BUSINESS ADVENTURES.

CONNECTED with my business undertakings there is not much of more than personal interest, further than that through them I was brought into wide acquaintance and many agreeable relations with the representative men of the state and not a few of the public men of the country. Of them I will make only brief mention.

After the loss of my property by the Quantrill raid, the insufficiency of a paymaster's salary to meet obligations incurred compelled me to resign and seek more lucrative employment. From early youth I had a strong ambition to engage in business for myself, and after some years of experiment in many lines it led me to large undertakings. These I found more to my taste. Railroad building was about that time becoming an established business, and the numerous railroads then building in New England offered the desired opportunity. Contracts on them occupied me some eleven years preceding my coming to Kansas, with the employment of from 50 to 100 hands, 50 to 60 horses, with a proportionate outfit of tools.

My first contract was on the Connecticut River railroad. This was followed by nine others under as many different corporations—the Worcester & Nashua, Keene & New Hampshire, Hartford, Fishkill & Providence, Middleton & Berlin, Vermont Central, New Jersey Central, Danbury & Norwalk, New Haven & Northampton, and the Pittsfield & North Adams roads. On closing up these contracts I came to Kansas with General Pomeroy, as I have already told, and made my entry into the hotel business by purchasing the American House in Kansas City. For the extension of the business and the mutual advantage of the two points, a year later I leased the Free State hotel in Lawrence, giving its management to brother Thomas. Both these hotels, from a financial point of view, proved unprofitable adventures. The Free State hotel was disastrous. The only compensation was through the publicity that the outrage gave and the public sympathy awakened. As the settlement of Lawrence had become of national interest, I felt that its representative hotel, which would be to the visitor its most impressive feature, should be worthy of its position. Therefore, I expended the whole of my means in appropriate furnishings and equipment. But its name was a crime, in the view of the usurping authorities. Within less than a month after it was destroyed the Kansas City house was sold at a sacrifice, under compulsion, to save it from a like fate.

The hostilities of 1856 and my labors connected with the relief of the free-state sufferers, and my connection with the northern armed immigration through Iowa, prevented my undertaking any private business further than the purchase of the ground occupied by the ruins of the

Free State hotel. A fortunate investment in Wyandotte land, made in the first projection of that town during the following winter, brought the means for fulfilling my rash vow to build a better hotel on the old Free State site. It also led to an extension of the hotel business and the establishment of a kindred enterprise. In connection with brother Thomas, we bought a hotel already built in Wyandotte and gave it our name. We next bought back the American House in Kansas City that



COL. S. W. ELDRIDGE.

we had sold under compulsion when mobs ruled the town, brother Thomas taking the management of it, and Leonard Arms, a brother-in-law, that of the house in Wyandotte.

Also, Robert Morrow had built a hotel in Lawrence on the corner where the Lawrence National Bank building now stands. Through brother Edwin, who became a partner with him in its management, we became interested there.

In that day the complement of the hotel, or rather the forerunner and auxiliary, was the stage coach—two facilities that with comfortable entertainment and ease of travel touch most kindly the personal feelings

of the traveler and reconcile him to the necessary privations in a crude settlement. My motto had been, in all lines of business I had undertaken, "First class"; and my business creed, the best in everything is not only the most acceptable to patrons but the most profitable to the proprietor; and he who serves the public best, fares best himself. The lines of stages we established as counterparts of the hotels were fitted with the most elegant of Concord coaches then built, with corresponding equipment and teams.

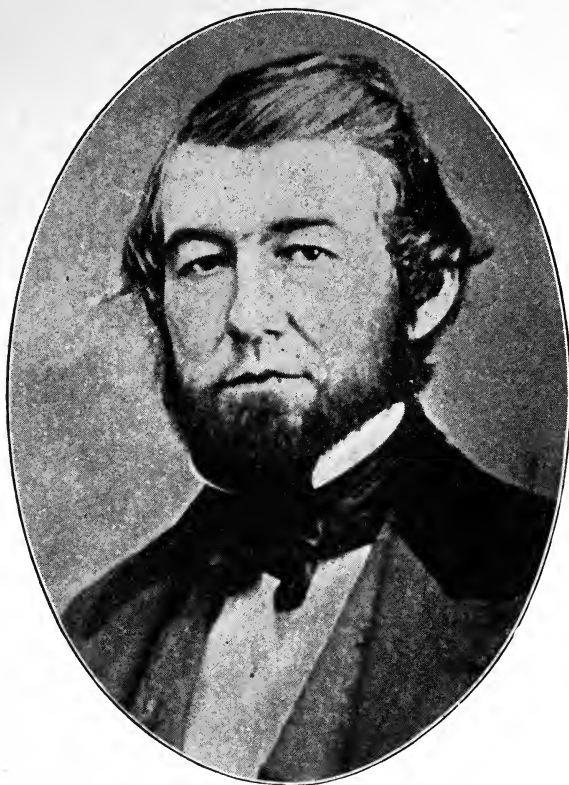
The inauguration of the first stage line, while not so widely celebrated as that of the later railroad, was for the incipient cities of Wyandotte and Lawrence no less enthusiastic and impressive. On the arrival of the coaches from the East a full corps of volunteers offered their services for unpacking and putting them together. When everything was in readiness, with the best horses that could be bought in the market harnessed to them, the whole train set out on a picnic excursion to Lawrence. All the vehicles were crowded with free passengers, with an abundance of all the requirements for an excursion taken along.

No direct road had yet been laid out and the route followed partly the trails and across the untracked prairie through the Delaware reserve. With reconnoitering for a route and the making of fords across unbridged streams, relieved by frequent picnicking, two days were spent on the road, ending with a triumphal procession after being ferried over the river at Lawrence. Prominent among these excursionists were Gaius Jenkins, James Blood and A. D. Searle, as well as many of the citizens of both towns whose names cannot now be recalled. The gaily painted coaches, contrasted with the plain and dingy vehicles in universal use, excited the admiration of the Indians, who all along the route came out to view them.

The route was next extended to Topeka by way of Lecompton, and was quickly followed by a branch line to Leavenworth. The business of the latter soon demanded a double daily line. The Wyandotte end was next extended eastward to Independence, and followed by a daily mail line by way of Kansas City, Wyandotte and Leavenworth to Weston. After two years' operation the whole system was sold to the Western Stage Company, that had been pushing westward with the settlements, from Wheeling, across Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Missouri, pioneering the railroads and surrendering to them as they advanced westward. The stimulating effect of these lines of travel and communication upon the settlement and business of the towns and of the whole country through which they passed was most apparent.

In the spring of 1857 I began rebuilding on the site of the Free State hotel, on a scale that more than fulfilled the defiant vow I made to Sheriff Jones. The building was of brick, four stories in height, fronting 100 feet on Massachusetts street and the full depth of the lot, 117 feet, on Winthrop, being the same dimensions but one story higher than the present Eldridge House, rebuilt after the Quantrill raid. The full cost of this undertaking was over \$80,000. As only a small part of this sum was in sight at the beginning, the enterprise, in what was then a mere frontier village, was an extremely hazardous venture, resting mainly

on strong faith. This foundation, however, proved sufficient, as the means to prosecute the work came as needed, through other business enterprises, and also through being associated with my three brothers, James Monroe, Thomas B. and Edwin S. Eldridge. At the beginning I had the promise of an equal partnership from Governor Robinson, C. W. Babcock and Gaius Jenkins, but when it came to raising the funds Robinson and Babcock begged to be released, and during the progress of the work Mr. Jenkins sold out his interest to us.



JAMES MONROE ELDRIDGE.

On its opening the Eldridge House became the pride of the town, and gained distinction as the best administered and most commodious hotel west of St. Louis. As such it became an important factor in securing the sessions of the legislatures, as they adjourned from Lecompton, the meeting of conventions and conferences, thus helping to determine Lawrence as the political capital during the territorial period of Kansas.

The rebuilding of the second Eldridge House after the destruction by Quantrill, though not so expensive, was accomplished with greater difficulty from the heavy loss entailed and the lack of resources that sprang

up so abundantly with the ingress of population in 1857. But as with the first, I felt its rebuilding to be an obligation, and managed by dint of resolution to accomplish it. After leasing it for a time I sold it to General Dietzler for \$40,000.

My next undertaking was building the Broadway hotel, now known as the Coates House, in Kansas City. This was another business adventure. Located in a bare addition, away from the business section, the outcome depended on drawing a high class of improvements and business around it. But the outcome justified the faith of its projectors. The bonus in lots given for the building made a fine profit on the venture. On its completion I sold it to brother Thomas, who, after managing it for some years, with Edwin, sold it to Kersey Coates.

Next in order came the building of the Eldridge House at Coffeyville, which when completed was kept for a time by brother Edwin.

The last of my hotel adventures was the Otis House in Atchison, built in 1872 at a cost of some \$70,000. This was for a time leased to my son-in-law, Wm. H. Savage, in partnership with McDaniel; then sold to Jim Burns. The great depression in values in 1874 intervening, wiped out all the profits anticipated at the beginning of this last enterprise.

In the interval of hotel building I received the contract for the construction of the main building of the State University, now named Fraser Hall, with Wm. Leshar as partner in charge of the masonry and Mr. Cronkhite, assistant, in charge of the work. This was the first example of its style of masonry—broken ashlar, rock face—constructed in the West, and stands yet as a model and standard of taste and adaptation to the local conditions in construction and style.



## APPENDIX.

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### SHALOR WINCHELL ELDRIDGE.

**S**HALOR WINCHELL ELDRIDGE, son of Lyman and Phœbe (Winchell) Eldridge, was born at West Springfield, Mass., August 29, 1816, and died at Lawrence, Kan., January 16, 1899. His grandfather, Elisha Winchell, was an officer in the Revolutionary War. He also served in the War of 1812, where he lost his life as did his son, Shalor Winchell. Other ancestors of Colonel Eldridge saw service in both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

On May 23, 1839, Mr. Eldridge married Mary R. Norton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ira Norton, of Southampton, Mass. To them were born seven children, three of whom, William B., Maud H., and Shalor W., jr., died in infancy. Mary S. became the wife of O. E. Learnard, of Lawrence. Alice M. married William B. Learnard and lives in Memphis, Tenn. Evangeline L. married, first, William H. Savage, of Lawrence, and second, L. M. Mathews, of Hiawatha. Josephine Phœbe married Dr. Frank M. Ellis, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Lawrence, September 5, 1871, and died in Kansas City, October 5, 1873. She was the third child of Mr. and Mrs. Eldridge, having been born at South Deerfield, Mass., January 26, 1846. Of her it has been written: "Although she was with us but a few years, yet such was her beauty, not only of face but of character, that she was ever an inspiration to a higher and nobler life. She has lived a rich life, an efficient, successful and well-rounded life, and now one that is crowned and glorified. The loving remembrance of the hundreds of children she has taught will hold her memory fresh and fragrant throughout years to come."

Mrs. Eldridge died at Lawrence, March 5, 1869. She was a true pioneer of the highest type. Her bravery and her mentality made of her a power for good in her community. She never wavered when the moment came to act, but always stood a loyal support to her husband in their many frontier trials. She was a true friend, a faithful mother, a most devoted wife. In her the poor and needy ever had a friend, and very many of them enjoyed the hospitality of her home as a home.

Mr. Eldridge married for his second wife Miss Caroline Tobey, of Dundee, N. Y., January 25, 1871. She was born at Ballston, N. Y., April 17, 1825, and while quite young moved with her parents to Dundee. After the death of Mr. Eldridge she returned to Dundee and lived there until her own passing. Her life was centered in her home and family and was full of gracious and unselfish service.

[From the *Kansas City Star*, January 16, 1899.]**COLONEL ELDRIDGE IS DEAD.**

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**KANSAS LOSES ONE OF ITS NOTABLE FREE-STATE PIONEERS.**

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WITH KERSEY COATES, ELDRIDGE HELPED GOVERNOR REEDER ESCAPE—A  
LEADER OF FREE-SOIL BANDS—HIS HOTEL DESTROYED IN  
QUANTRILL'S RAID.

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LAWRENCE, KAN., Jan. 16 [1899].—Col. Shalor W. Eldridge died at his home here at nine o'clock this morning, after an illness of ten days. He was eighty-two years old. The cause of his death was pneumonia.

Among the early comers to Kansas there were few better known in the struggles of the state for liberty than Colonel Eldridge. It was Eldridge and his wife, who, with Kersey Coates, helped Governor Reeder to escape. It was Eldridge who led bands of free-state emigrants to Kansas. It was Eldridge who secured the issue of the Leecompton proclamation calling together the free-state legislature. It was the Eldridge House the Quantrill raiders burned.

Colonel Eldridge was born at West Springfield, Mass., August 29, 1816. His grandfather, Elisha Winchell, was an officer in the Revolutionary army, and an uncle, Shalor Winchell, died in the service in the War of 1812. His father, Lyman Eldridge, was a mechanic; his mother's name was Phoebe Winchell.

Young Eldridge's early tastes were for large enterprises. In his youth he engaged in trade and in various occupations until he was twenty years old, when he started out as a railroad contractor. This work occupied his time for about twelve years.

Fifty-four years ago he started for Kansas, arriving at Kansas City January 3, 1855. He then purchased of Gen. S. C. Pomeroy the American House at Kansas City, which General Pomeroy had previously purchased for the Emigrant Aid Society. This house was the headquarters of the free-state men, and in it Colonel Eldridge and his family had many adventures. The proslavery men stopped at the house in their incursions into Kansas, and their demonstrations frequently threatened disaster to the house.

At one time the house was beset by the border ruffians, Captain Pate and a large body of men demanding that the free-state men be delivered to the mob, when Colonel Eldridge and his youngest brother, Edwin, stood at the door with arms in their hands and commanded the mob to halt. A long interview followed and Pate gave up the effort. A half dozen obnoxious free-state men were in the house, and their lives were saved by Eldridge's desperate courage.

**THE ESCAPE OF REEDER**

When Governor Reeder escaped from Kansas in May, 1856, he went to

this house and was hidden for three weeks. At one time Mrs. Eldridge, to whose courage her husband was greatly indebted, quickly covered Governor Reeder with a bed, and as the ruffians approached the door of the room she and her sewing girl sat quietly at work while a company of exasperated men left the house, chagrined and disappointed at finding nobody in that room except a quiet family at work. At least half a dozen times the governor was saved in similar expedients. His meals were handed to him over the transom or clandestinely carried to him.

Finally it was determined that the governor must be got away from the place. The steamboat *Converse* lay at the wharf for the night, on its downward trip. Its captain was about the only free-state commander on the Missouri river. Kersey Coates arranged that he should take the governor on the boat about six miles below Kansas City in disguise as an Irish laborer. A man was confidentially hired to bring a skiff from Wyandotte to a secluded spot just below the city, and to this Governor Reeder and E. S. Eldridge and his wife were to repair in the dark. Governor Reeder was dressed in heavy brogans, corduroy trousers and a striped hickory shirt. His whiskers and mustache were shaved, his false teeth taken out, and he carried a dirty clay pipe in his mouth. An oil painting of the governor in this costume is now in a hall of the Coates House in Kansas City. Thus attired he sat and smoked in the public hall and afterwards walked quietly away to the place selected. Here he met Eldridge and his wife, and the three entered the little boat and proceeded down the river about six miles to a woodyard. He hid himself here till morning, and when the boat came along hailed it. The captain gruffly inquired where the passengers were. Reeder replied that there was none but he. To this the captain responded in a very angry manner, reproving him for hailing his boat, and shortly ordering him aft among the deck hands. Thus Governor Reeder escaped from Kansas, where hundreds of desperate men sought his life, traveling the entire trip to St. Louis as a deck passenger.

#### BOMBARDING THE FREE-STATE HOTEL.

In the early part of 1856 Colonel Eldridge leased the Free State hotel in Lawrence and equipped it as a first-class hotel. On May 21, the same year, it was destroyed by Sheriff Jones and his posse under indictment as a nuisance by the proslavery court, David R. Atchison aiming the first cannon. As the cannon balls had little effect on it, the house was burned with nearly all the furniture and provisions.

Immediately after this Eldridge was appointed to go to Washington with a memorial of the free-state men. He attended the Philadelphia convention which nominated Fremont, and was also a delegate to the Buffalo convention, where he was appointed one of the national committee and made its agent for the Kansas immigration. Under this authority he conducted large bodies of men to Kansas through Iowa and Nebraska.

Eldridge raised large amounts of provisions and ammunition, which he brought to the state at various times during the entire period of the difficulties. He procured a large amount of lead pipe and ammunition at Council Bluffs, and although he paid for it, had a fight at that place to

take it away. It was during the same trip that Robert Morrow procured 200 stands of arms of Governor Grimes of Iowa.

Eldridge influenced Secretary Stanton, acting governor in the absence of Governor Walker, to call the newly elected free-state legislature together to secure a vote upon the Lecompton constitution. Lane in the meantime had been holding meetings all over the territory for the same purpose, and the members of the new legislature had met to demand the same action, but Colonel Eldridge was the man who went to Lecompton and came back with the proclamation.

#### QUANTRILL AND THE ELDRIDGE HOUSE.

In 1857, with his brothers, Edwin and Thomas and James, he erected the Eldridge House in Lawrence, at a cost of \$80,000. It was destroyed by Quantrill August 21, 1863. The same year he started a daily stage line from Kansas City to Topeka, Lawrence to Leavenworth, and Independence, Mo., to Weston, Mo.

Enlisting as a private in the Second Kansas, Eldridge was elected lieutenant and served six months. In 1863 he was appointed a paymaster in the United States army by President Lincoln, and served about one year, when he resigned. In 1868 he was appointed quartermaster general of Kansas by the Kansas legislature, and the next year he was elected city marshal of Lawrence. In 1865 he rebuilt the Eldridge House at Lawrence. In 1867 he built the Broadway hotel in Kansas City, now called the Coates House. In 1871 he built the Eldridge House at Coffeyville and the next year he built the Otis House at Atchison.

He married Miss Mary B. Norton. They had seven children, only three of whom, daughters, are living. They are Mrs. Col. O. E. Learnard, of Lawrence; Mrs. W. B. Learnard, of Memphis, Tenn.; and Mrs. Dr. L. M. Mathews, of Hiawatha, Kan. Mrs. Eldridge died in 1869. Two years later he was married a second time, to Miss Caroline Tobey, of Dundee, N. Y.

For the last years of his life Colonel Eldridge lived quietly at his home in Lawrence. At the time he was taken ill he was engaged in writing a book giving his personal recollections of the early times in Kansas and of the history he helped to make.

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The funeral service for the late Col. S. W. Eldridge was held this afternoon [January 18, 1899] at two o'clock at the Plymouth Congregational church. There was a very large attendance, the older citizens turning out in large numbers to show their esteem for one of their number who had undergone with them the trials and hardships incident to the establishment of a free government in the state, and the building of the city of Lawrence, in circumstances that would have daunted the courage of the bravest; and the younger generations were present to signify their respect of the memory of one who had made possible for them the advantages they now enjoy.

The mourning family, consisting of his wife, the three daughters, Mrs. Col. O. E. Learnard, Mrs. W. B. Learnard, of Memphis, and Mrs. Dr.

L. M. Mathews, of Hiawatha, and their husbands; his niece, Mrs. C. C. Vining, of Corning, Kan., and her husband; his grandchildren and their families; his nephew, Mr. Ed. S. Eldridge of Kansas City, and his son James; his old-time Southampton friend, Mr. A. D. Searle, and others, were surrounded by hundreds of friends to whom the blow of Colonel Eldridge's death came with almost as much force as upon his own family, and the church was filled with those from whom expressions of the deepest sympathy and profoundest regret came with the most heartfelt feeling. The Grand Army of the Republic was present as an organization, to do honor to one of its bravest and best members, whose loyalty was one of the features of his early life; and the Ladies of the Grand Army also assembled to show their respect for the early leader.

The services at the church were conducted by Rev. Dr. Richard Cordley, who was also a participant with Colonel Eldridge in the struggles that made the early history of the state so memorable, and his words of tribute came from the heart, and fittingly characterized a life that had been fraught with troublesome activity. Doctor Cordley was assisted in the services by Rev. G. D. Rogers, of the First Baptist church. After the brief services at the church the body was taken to Oak Hill cemetery and there interred in the family plat by loving hands, and hidden from the sorrow expressed on the faces of all who surrounded that last earthly resting place.

There were many floral offerings, slight expression of the feeling manifested by all, and the casket was hidden from view by nature's offering of beauty and fragrance. The pallbearers were the five grandsons of Colonel Eldridge—Mr. Paul Learnard, Mr. Tracy Learnard, Mr. Oscar Learnard, Mr. Shalor E. Learnard, Mr. Burton E. Savage—and his nephew, Mr. Ed S. Eldridge.

Through the solemn services sweet and sympathetic music was furnished under the direction of Miss Kate Riggs, and the sorrow of the occasion was broken by this and the bright sunshine from above, which took away the darkness of the pall of death that had come upon the bereaved family and friends.—*From the Lawrence Journal, January 18, 1899.*

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Another of the old standard Kansans, who with blood and fire and brain and courage shaped its earliest destinies, is removed by the death of Colonel Eldridge. He died at the ripe age of eighty-two. The storms he weathered and the energies he put forth seem to have made him hardier and more durable than men whose lives fall in softer places.

He lived in Kansas forty-four years. When he came in 1855 it was as a leader of the free-state immigrants. His house at Kansas City was the headquarters for free-state men. Strange perils he passed through, and blood-curdling adventures for himself and others. His hotel at Lawrence was destroyed twice, once by the orders of a proslavery court and again by Quantrill's ruffian band. Colonel Eldridge was one of those mainly instrumental in securing the convening of the Lecompton legislature and

the adoption of the free-state constitution. Afterwards he served in the Union army and filled positions of high trust in this state.

His name is inwoven with the thrilling and ever memorable history of Kansas, as one of the most faithful and truest of the pioneers.—*Leavenworth Times*.

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The death of Colonel Eldridge takes away another of the great men who did their part towards making Kansas a free state. Colonel Eldridge was conspicuous in the early struggles, and the part he took did much to accomplish the end of all patriotic desires at that time. Of recent years he had been in retirement, but he never lost interest in affairs, and at the last was engaged in writing a history of Kansas. In the death of Colonel Eldridge Lawrence and Kansas has lost a commanding figure.—*Lawrence World*.

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The man who faced down a mob howling for the life of Governor Reeder in the bloody days of Kansas, and who twice built the historic Eldridge House at Lawrence, died at his home in Lawrence yesterday in the eighty-third year of age. Shalor Winchell Eldridge was one of the comparatively few remaining men of those who made history in the early '50's in Kansas. He came to Kansas in 1855 and has been identified as one of its most active citizens until failing health compelled retirement to inactive life. He was a stalwart figure in "free-state" days, an actor in many stirring scenes; he was courageous, aggressive, reliant and invaluable factor in the bitter struggle with the proslavery men. A goodly volume would be required to tell the history with which he was intimately connected.—*Ottawa Republican*.

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The late Col. Shalor W. Eldridge, whose death to-day is announced, bore a part in the early days, not only of Kansas, but of Kansas City. He was one of Kansas City's early hotel keepers, and a great deal of early history passed by and went through his house of entertainment here. After his experiences in Kansas City his name was preserved in that of the Eldridge House in Lawrence, with its many vicissitudes of war and peace. In appearance Colonel Eldridge was a most genial gentleman, who looked as if he cared for nothing better than to welcome the coming and speed the passing guest; yet he was a man who, in a very trying and dangerous time, held firmly by principles that were to him sacred, and was ready at any time to do and dare in their defense. In the story of Kansas, which is now getting to be an old and long story, his name will be found on many pages. He went to Kansas early and led many other people there, at one time conducting to the frontier a party of 284 emigrants. He was privileged to live long and see an abundant harvest reaped from the fields in which he sowed.—*Kansas City Star*.

## G. A. R. RESOLUTIONS.

*Tribute Passed by Washington Post on the Death of Colonel Eldridge.*

The committee on resolutions upon the death of Colonel Eldridge, of Washington Post, G. A. R., has offered the following:

Shalor W. Eldridge was born in Massachusetts, August 29, 1816; died in Lawrence, Kan., January 16, 1899. In offering these resolutions of respect to the memory of Colonel Eldridge, the committee wish it to be understood that brevity was neither occasioned by want of material or want of respect, but because his life has passed into printed history. The history of that great ten years from '55 to '65 (the best ten years this nation has known, the years of which every true Kansan is most proud) has been so well covered that we touch upon it only to say of Colonel Eldridge, that this history was his history, for he could truly say, "all of which I saw, part of which I was."

As we read of his share in the battle for freedom in Kansas we see that his story was the story of loss and sorrow. While his home was twice destroyed, it seemed to spur him on to renewed energy to accomplish the purpose to turn Kansas to the free-state column. The history of the past shows that the diplomacy and tact he exercised in his interviews with President Pierce and the territorial governors had more to do with bringing about freedom in Kansas than any one thing among all the great deeds of that time. Leaving the history as it is, we know that he was a comrade of whose record we are all proud, in whose association we were honored and whose memory we will cherish. A life, like a day, cannot be reckoned or described until it is past. Life derives its value from its use alone. When a good man dies he leaves earth poorer for his departure, but when he leaves behind a record of good deeds—an example which goes to make this world better—he leaves a legacy the influence of which cannot be measured until time is no more. 'Twas a pleasant sight to see him in his last years as a soldier of the cross, marching to that higher liberty with which Christ maketh His children free. As the ranks close up we know:

"The muffled drum's sad call has beat  
The soldier's last tattoo;  
No more on life's parade shall meet  
Those comrades, brave and true.  
On fame's eternal camping ground  
Their silent tents are spread,  
And glory guards with solemn sound,  
The bivouac of the dead."

C. C. COLLINS.  
S. HOLLISTER.

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[From a Topeka newspaper.]

**\$1,500 FOR \$60,000.**

## COL. S. W. ELDRIDGE'S UPS AND DOWNS.

One of the claims presented yesterday to State Auditor McCarthy for payment, under the provision of the act of the last session of the legislature for the payment of Quantrill raid claims, was that of Col. Shalor W. Eldridge, says the *Capital*, for many years a resident of Lawrence. A truthful history of this claim and a faithful portrayal of the remarkable life of the man who presented the claim—his brilliant career in the early days of Kansas, his unfortunate business transactions and his downfall later in life—would make a romantic story. The full amount of Colonel Eldridge's claim is \$60,000, he being the greatest sufferer by the memorable Quantrill raid at Lawrence in August, 1863. Under the law passed by the legislature last winter for the payment of these claims

Colonel Eldridge can receive only \$1,500 for his claim, the law providing that in no case should a claimant be paid more than \$1,500. Colonel Eldridge was the owner of the Eldridge House at Lawrence. It was erected at great expense, and taking into consideration that in those days Kansas was almost a wilderness, it was a magnificent building. Its furnishings were new and elaborate, and it was the boast of Colonel Eldridge that it was the finest building in the state. Lawrence was then growing and improving more rapidly than it has ever improved since; the city was at its best, and was the general business center of the state. In August, 1863, came the terrible Quantrill raid, and Eldridge's fine building was burned to the ground. Colonel Eldridge was a bold and dashing business man, and during his lifetime has been into all sorts of business ventures in the West. Though the total destruction of his property was a sad blow to him, he immediately rebuilt a more costly hotel, which to-day stands on the same ground in Lawrence, but the venturesome colonel is not its owner. The ups and downs of Shalor W. Eldridge have been many. At one time he was said to be a millionaire; then came unfortunate speculations, and everything was lost. A few years more and he amassed another large fortune, and the people said the bold and sagacious colonel was the nerviest man in the country. But misfortunes have again befallen him, and his friends say that he is again at the bottom of the ladder. He is now pegging away in a little gold mine in Arkansas, in hopes that some day he will strike his fortune. He has been working at it for a year or more, but thus far it has failed to pay him anything. The colonel, however, is undaunted, and says the day will come when he can again live in luxury and ease. He is the same daring and courageous adventurer that he was twenty years ago, when a millionaire, and men say that Eldridge will again move on the top wave.

No man was better known in Kansas than Colonel Eldridge, but of late years he has disappeared from public notice. He managed to leave his work long enough to come to Topeka and present his claim. After waiting twenty-five years he is obliged to take the pittance of \$1,500 for a claim of \$60,000. A few years ago when asked if he would compromise for \$15,000, he scoffed the idea, but he finds now that he must take \$1,500 or lose it all.



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